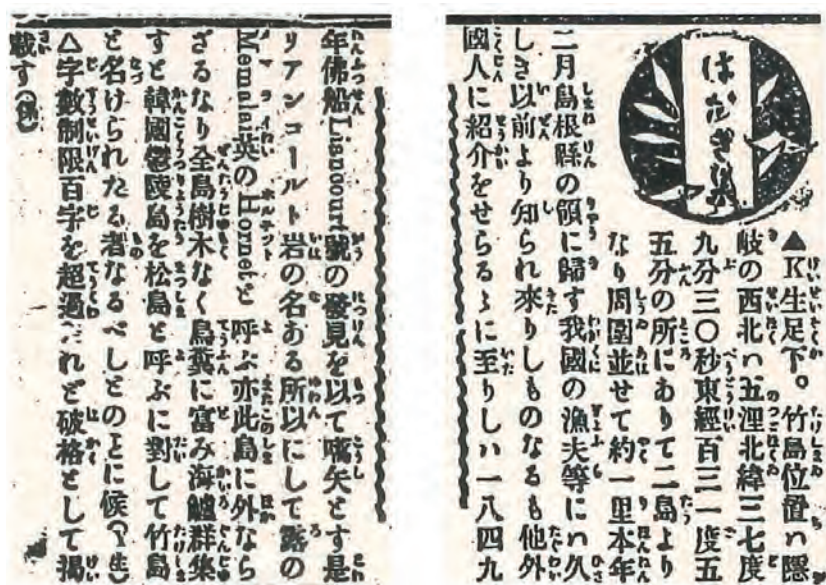


Period II (1)-iii. Article reporting on the incorporation of Takeshima into Shimane Prefecture

Editorial from the Yomiuri Shimbun (newspaper) regarding the name “Takeshima” (July 1905)

No.16 Postcard Collection

FY2016/P10 July 10, 1905 (Editorial from Yomiuri Shimbun)



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Overview

Takeshima was called “Matsushima” during the Edo Period and “Liancourt Island” in the early Meiji Period. This is an editor’s reply to the question from a reader regarding the island being officially named “Takeshima” after its incorporation into Shimane Prefecture in 1905 (dated July 10, 1905).

In the late 18th century, European explorers had made a mistake when measuring the latitude and longitude of Utsuryo Island, resulting in the appearance of a phantom island west of the actual Utsuryo Island in European maps. This caused confusion over the name of the islands: the phantom island was considered to be “Takeshima”, the name of Utsuryo Island during the Edo period, the actual Utsuryo island has come to be named “Matsushima” (the name from the Edo period of the current Takeshima), and the current Takeshima was sometimes called “Liancourt Rocks” (“Lyanko/Lanco Island”) after a ship named “Le Liancourt” passed nearby in 1849. Based on this historical background, this material shows that Utsuryo Island – which is called Dagelet Island in English – was called “Matsushima,” and the island, which was called “Liancourt Rocks” at that time, and known to Japanese fishermen for a long time, was officially named “Takeshima”. (By around 1880, it had become widely known that the phantom island did not exist)

Except for one typo (the Russian name “Memalai” should be spelled “Menelai”), this article reflects the exact content of the Shimane Prefecture Notice No. 40 of February 1905, including the latitude and longitude measurements “37° 9’ 30” N, 131° 55’ 0” E.”

Excerpt [English translation]

Postcard Collection

(Text omitted) Takeshima is located 85 nautical miles (157 km) northwest of Oki at 37° 9’ 30” N, 131° 55’ 0” E. Takeshima consists of two islands, and the circumference is approximately 4km. It was incorporated into Shimane Prefecture in February of this year. Takeshima has been known to fishermen in our country for a long time, but Takeshima became known to foreigners when it was found by a French ship named “Le Liancourt” in 1849. This is the reason why Takeshima has been called “Liancourt Rocks.” “Liancourt Rocks” has been also known as “Memalai” in Russian, and “Hornet” in English as well. There are no trees on the island, there are many bird droppings, and sea lions gather there. While the Korean Utsuryo Island is called “Matsushima,” “Liancourt Rocks” is named “Takeshima.” (text omitted)

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