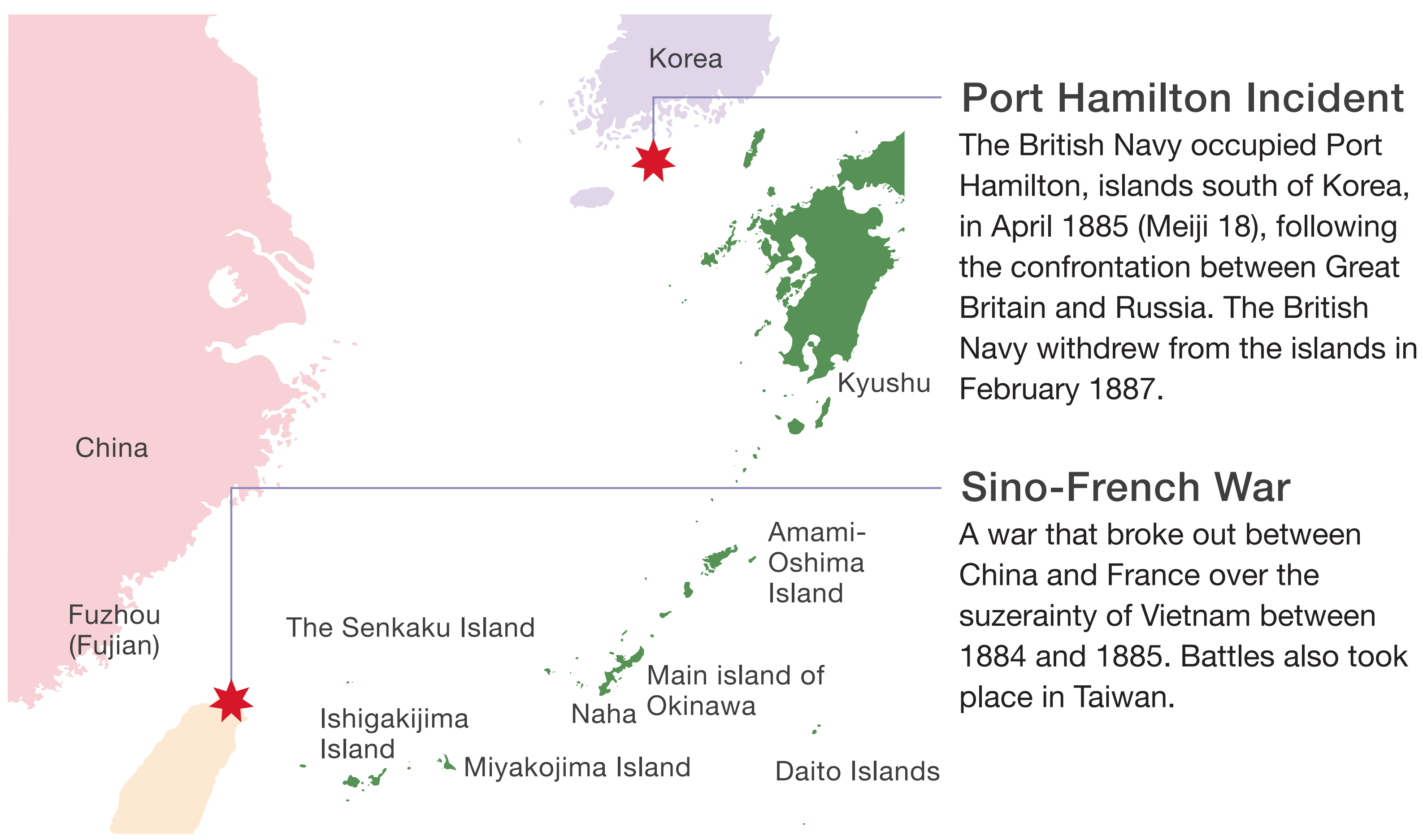


The Senkaku Islands in 1885-1895

1885-1895: Landing surveys of the Senkaku Islands, expansion of fishing operations and incorporation into the Japanese territory

1. The Port Hamilton Incident and the landing survey of the Senkaku Islands (1885)

In the second half of the 19th century, Western countries began to advance into Asia in earnest, and the struggle for power between Britain and Russia intensified in East Asia. In this context, in 1885 (Meiji 18), Britain occupied Korea's islands of Port Hamilton, which had a good harbor and was a strategic stronghold, as a base against Russia. The Japanese Government was concerned that European countries might also occupy the outlying islands around Japan. For this reason, the Japanese Government worked to strengthen surveillance of the surrounding remote islands, such as the Sakishima Islands and the Goto Islands, and as part of this, they dispatched Ishizawa Hyogo, an official from Okinawa Prefecture, and other officials to the uninhabited islands of the Daito Islands, as well as the Senkaku Islands, which were not yet under government control, to conduct a landing survey.

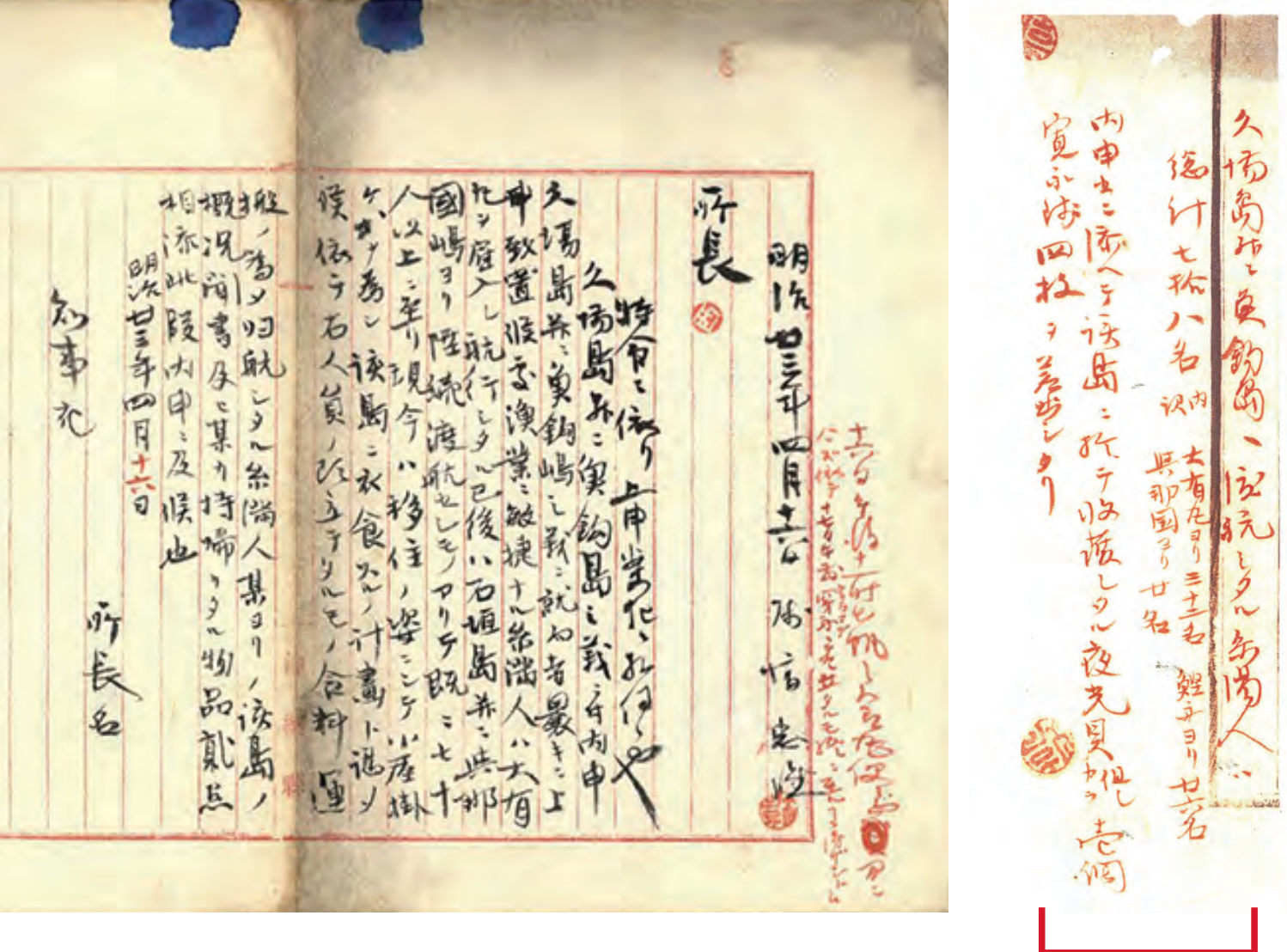


2. The Advance of Fishermen to the Senkaku Islands and the Incorporation of the Islands into Japanese Territory (1889-1895)

The Senkaku Islands were surveyed due to the need to strengthen surveillance of outlying islands, but from around 1889, fishermen began to move to the islands after learning that products from the islands, such as shells of great green turbans and albatross feathers, were well sold in Europe and America. For this reason, Okinawa Prefecture submitted several proposals to the central government to incorporate the Senkaku

Islands into Okinawa Prefecture in order to manage the activities of these fishermen. At the same time, the Prefecture also sought to provisionally manage the islands. The Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Okinawa Prefecture in 1895 after the Government carefully ascertained that they were not under the control of any country, including the Qing.

Figure 4 Documents concerning the Yaeyama Islands-Kuba Island

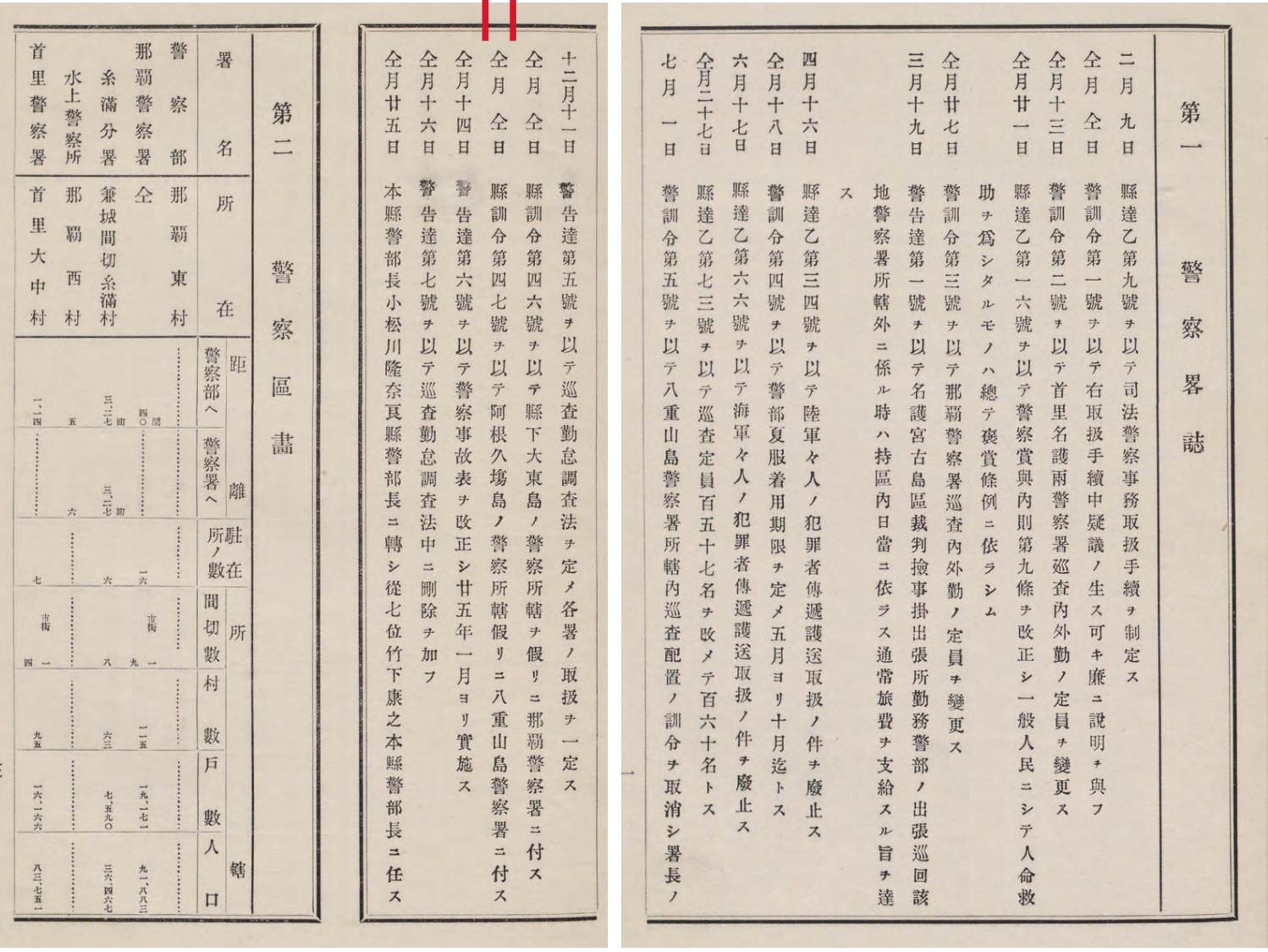


1890 (Meiji 23) Repository: Okinawa Prefectural Library

In this document, a total of 78 people went to Kuba and Uotsuri Islands, which indicates that there were already many fishermen operating around the islands by that time.

Excerpt from the document
A total of 78 Itoman residents went to the islands of Kuba and Uotsuri.
They consisted of 32 persons traveling on the Daiyu Maru, 26 on bonito ships, and 20 from Yonaguni. The report was accompanied by one *yakogai* (green turban snail) shell harvested on said islands, for which I disbursed four Kan'ei coins. [Hanawa's personal seal]

Figure 5 Okinawa Prefectural Police Statistics (1891)

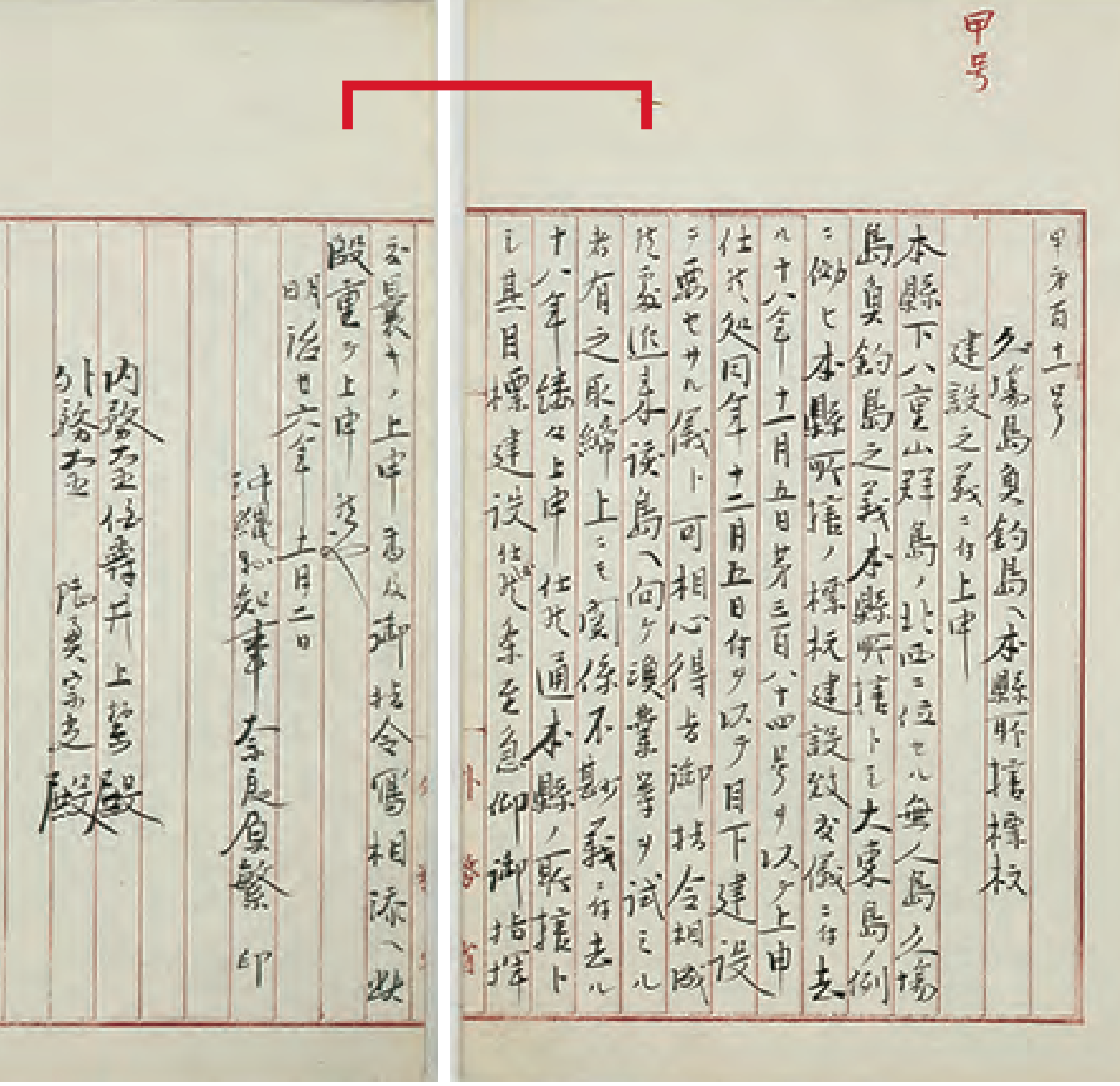


Repository: National Archives of Japan

This report records that the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture issued an order to the Police in December 1891 that the Akon-kuba Islands (i.e., the Senkaku Islands) be provisionally placed under the jurisdiction of Yaeyama Islands Police Station.

Excerpt from the document
(1891) On the same day and same month (December 11) Prefectural instruction No. 47 states that the Akon-kuba Islands are provisionally placed under the jurisdiction of the Yaeyama Islands Police Station.

Figure 6 Proposal for incorporating the islands into Okinawa Prefecture and erecting national markers



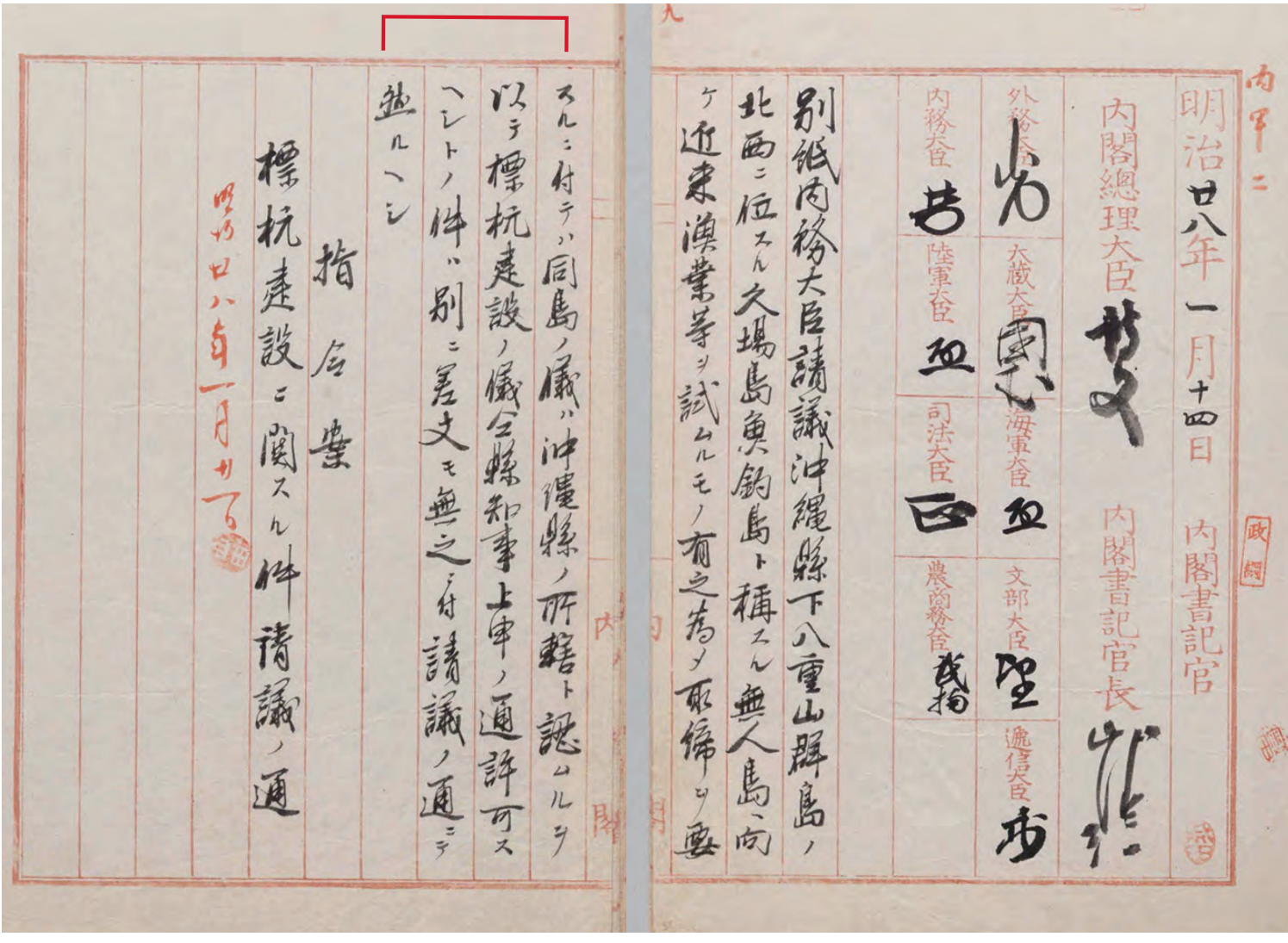
Ko No.111, *Teikoku Hanto Kankei Zakken* (Miscellaneous Matters Related to Imperial Territory) November 2, 1893 (Meiji 26) Repository: Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Excerpt from the document
Recently, people are coming to the islands to attempt fishery and other activities, and because these not infrequently involve legal control, I [Governor of Okinawa Prefecture] would like to erect markers of this Prefecture's jurisdiction, as I reported in detail back in 1885. I therefore urgently request your guidance, and hereby once again make a proposal to that effect, enclosing copies of my previous proposal and your instruction.

Events and Incidents between 1885-1895

1885:	Okinawa Prefectural officials landed on the Senkaku Islands to conduct a survey. The construction of national markers was postponed.
1889:	The Yaeyama Island Joint Fisheries Company, an organization to promote the fishing industry, was established on Ishigakijima Island.
1890:	A survey by the Okinawa Prefectural Government of the fishing situation on the Senkaku Islands revealed that a total of 78 Okinawan fishermen had traveled to the Senkaku Islands (Figure 4).
1890:	The Governor of Okinawa Prefecture proposed that the central government incorporate the Senkaku Islands under the jurisdiction of the Yaeyama Island Office "because it is necessary to control the activities of fishermen."
1891:	The Governor of Okinawa Prefecture issued an order to provisionally put the Senkaku Islands under the jurisdiction of Yaeyama Island Police Station (Figure 5).
1893:	The Governor of Okinawa Prefecture again proposed that the Senkaku Islands be incorporated into Okinawa Prefecture, saying that it is necessary to control the fishing activities of fishermen in the area (Figure 6).
1895:	In response to the proposal from Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese Government incorporated the Senkaku Islands into the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture for the need to control fishermen (Figure 7).

Figure 7 Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa Prefecture to erect national markers and have jurisdiction over the Senkaku Islands



Cabinet decision / Draft Instruction / On the matter of erecting markers, as stated in the request, *Kobun Ruishu* (the compiled records of the precedents and law) Edition No. 19, 1895 January 14, 1895 (Meiji 28) Repository: National Archives of Japan

This document contains the text of the Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa Prefecture to have jurisdiction over Uotsuri and Kuba Islands (dated January 14, 1895) and the text of a draft instruction to the prefecture.

Excerpt from the document
We [the members of the Cabinet] have no particular objection regarding the matter of permitting the erection of markers as requested by the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture by permitting the Prefecture to have jurisdiction over the islands.

Japanese fishermen began to move into the Senkaku Islands from around 1889. Albatross feathers were used for futons, great green turban shells were used for buttons, and bird specimens and stuffed birds were also exported overseas. The Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Japanese territory in 1895 in order to manage the activities of these fishermen.

