Graves of Japanese and Russian Soldiers

There are two gravestones in Ogoshi-no- hama beach, Nagato City, which faces the Sea of Japan.One is the Gravestone of Russian Fleet Soldiers and the other is the Gravestone of Hitachi Maru Victims. Both gravestones relate to the Russo-Japanese War (1904~1905) that occurred during the Meiji period.

Gravestone of Hitachi Maru Victims

During the same time as the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, large cargo-passenger ship Hitachi Maru became a chartered ship for the army. On June 15, 1904, as the ship, carrying a battalion of 1000 some people, headed to the battlefield in China, it was sunk in the Genkai Sea by the Russian army killing many people. The bodies have surfaced offshore, and on June 22 of the same year, a villager by the name of Kametaro Kimigawa found a body in the middle of fishing, picked it up and buried it at his village. In December of 1921, a gravestone was built by the Kayoi village.

Gravestone of Russian Fleet Soldiers (Russian War Dead)

In the early 20 th century, the Russo-Japanese War broke out as Russia and Japan fought to control Korea and Manchuria (northeastern part of China). On May 27-28, 1905, the Russian fleet was destroyed off of Tsushima in the Naval Battle of the Sea of Japan. Many Russian soldiers lost their lives in the naval battle, with their bodies washed ashore in many areas of the San'in region. Those living alongside Ogoshi-no- hama beach held reverent

funeral services for the bodies that washed up. For a long time, stones found in nature were placed there as a tombstone, but in May of 1968, commemorating the 100th year of the Meiji Restoration, the current gravestone was built thanks solely to the local volunteers, and their initiative.

Every year, a memorial service is held on June 15, the day when Hitachi Maru was sunk, for the Gravestone of Russian Fleet Soldiers and the adjacent Gravestone of Hitachi Maru Victims. At first, the memorial service was held on site, but from several years ago, it has been moved to the local Kogan-ji Temple.