

Record of the 1896 Sanriku Earthquake and Tsunami -1 From the graphic magazine Fuzoku Gaho

The 1896 Sanriku earthquakes struck at 7:32 p.m. on June 15th, 1896 with a magnitude of 8.2. Around 8:00 p.m., a large tsunami hit the Sanriku coast, where most of the deaths and serious damage occurred. Around 22,000 people were killed and more than 10,000 houses were either washed away or suffered complete or partial damage.

The following records of the damage relate to areas in present-day Minamisanriku.

Tsunami height: Shizugawa: 3.6 meters average

Utatsu/Ishihama: 12.6 meters

Nakayama: 10.8 meters

Tanoura: 10.3 meters

Deaths: Shizugawa: 441 persons (Shizuhama: 168, Hosoura: 122, Okinosuka/Umechi: 34, other areas: 117)

Utatsu: 799 persons (Tanoura: 208, Nakayama: 324, Natari: 115, other areas: 324)

Houses washed away in the tsunami:

Shizugawa: 175 houses (Shizuhama: 60, Hosoura: 34, Okinosuka/Umechi: 36, other areas: 45)

Utatsu: 273 houses (Isatoma: 60, Tanoura: 52, Minato: 39, other areas: 122)

This tsunami was reported in the graphic magazine Fuzoku Gaho published on July 25th, 1896. Drawings conveyed the horrific extent of the damage. The following is an image from the magazine that relates to what is now Minamisanriku, courtesy of the Rias Ark Museum of Art collection.



▲ The terrible devastation of Shizugawa (Shizugawa Town)

The situation immediately after the disaster. At center right, several men are reporting on the situation in the surrounding area.

"It looks like everywhere has been damaged badly...There's nothing we can do..."

In the foreground, a dying person is laid on the ground and nursed.

Source: Fuzoku Gaho No. 118, special edition (Rias Ark Museum of Art collection)