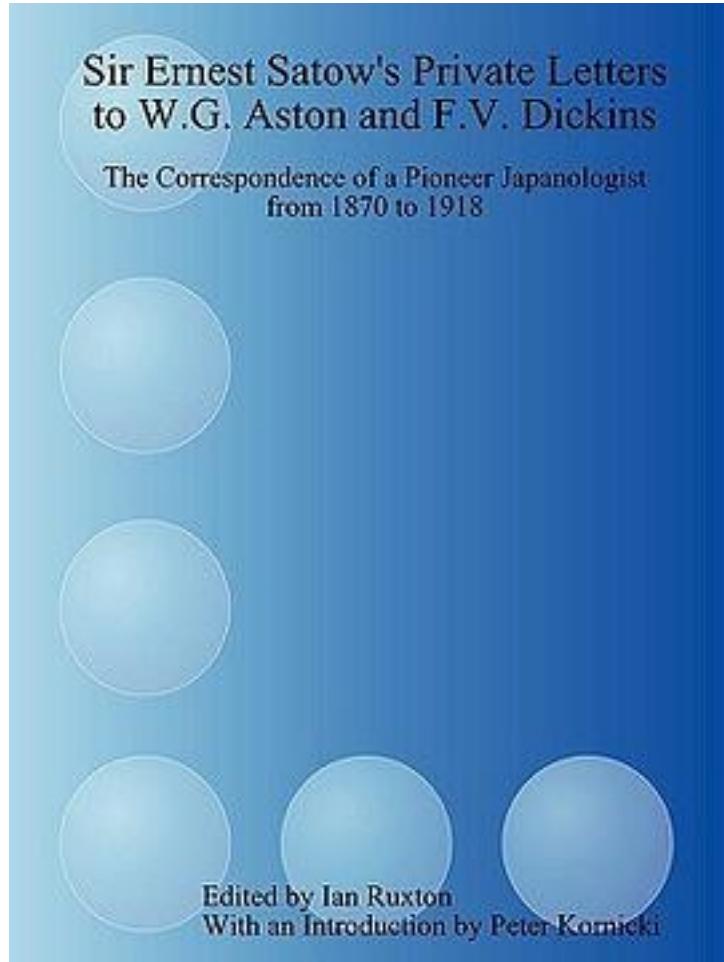


# Sir Ernest Satow's Private Letters to W.G. Aston and F.V. Dickins



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著者:Satow

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Transcribed from the Satow Papers, annotated and indexed by Ian Ruxton.

With an Introduction by Peter Kornicki.

### Author's Preface

It gives me much pleasure to be able to publish these important letters of Sir Ernest Satow (1843-1929), written in the period 1870-1918 to his two great friends W.G. Aston and F.V. Dickins, as part of a sustained effort over more than a decade to make the Satow

Papers more easily available to scholars and the general reading public. It is hoped that

some hitherto unresolved issues relating to this distinguished scholar-diplomat may be

cleared up thanks to this publication: for example, Japanese scholars of Satow, beginning

with the late Nobutoshi Hagihara (1926-2001) their doyen who first discovered the Satow

Papers at the old Public Record Office, sometimes seem to express puzzlement as to why

Satow should have effectively turned his back on Japan (but not his Japanese family) in

retirement. One answer to this conundrum is surely provided by the relative lack of information and news about Japan which would have been available to Satow in retirement

at Ottery St Mary, Devon. There was of course no internet in those days, and Japan was a

world away despite occasional visitors. Another lies in Satow's clearly stated preference for

and higher estimation of European over Japanese culture explained by Peter Kornicki below, and yet another in the deaths of both his closest 'old Japonian' friends with whom

he could and did discuss Japanese culture in letters: Aston in 1911 and Dickins in 1915. As

for his Japanese books, he made very large collections and complained of having too many

to Dickins (186), and already in 1881 he was planning to 'shut up all Asiatic books' on his

return to live in England (140).

In the end it was apparently – as with Shakespeare’s Mark Antony in his funeral oration

for Julius Caesar – not that Satow loved Japan less, but that he loved Europe more. Japan

was delightful and fascinating as a subject of work-related study while he was there as a

young man. But do not most of us - wherever we come from - ultimately value and cherish

most highly the culture in which we were born and nurtured, and seek to return to it? Be

this as it may, Satow’s deep concern for the welfare of his friends shines through in this

long correspondence, and we may feel privileged to be able to eavesdrop on one side of

these erudite and thoughtful exchanges.

Ian Ruxton

Kyushu Institute of Technology

作者介绍:

About Ian Ruxton

Author

Hello! I have been a lulu.com author since 2004 when I published my translation of a book about Japanese students at Cambridge University in the Meiji era (1868-1912), still available here. I teach English at a Japanese national university, Kyushu Institute of Technology (KIT) in the city of Kitakyushu on the large island of Kyushu in Western Japan. (We are about half way between Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but a long way from Tokyo.)

My main research is the life and letters of Sir Ernest Satow (1843-1929), a distinguished British diplomat who served in Japan for a total of about 25 years, also China, Siam, Uruguay and Morocco. I have also done four Japanese to English translations, the most recent one published in October 2011. Please take a look at my works. Thank you for your time.

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