

Ernest Satow (1843–1929)

Ernest Satow introduced Okunikko and many other areas of Japan to Western readers through his guidebooks, newspaper articles, and personal recommendations. Satow arrived in Japan in 1862 as an interpreter for the British legation and first visited Nikko in 1872. He wrote four articles describing the area's charms for the *Japan Weekly Mail*, a newspaper widely read by foreign residents in Yokohama. In 1875, he published *A Guide Book to Nikko*.

He left the country in 1883, taking a few weeks leave before being sent to Bangkok, but in 1895 he returned to Japan as a diplomatic envoy. Satow's large social network included many influential acquaintances, and he is said to have frequently encouraged people to visit Nikko and Lake Chuzenji.

In 1896, Satow built a house on the southern shore of Lake Chuzenji, which he used as a summer residence until he was assigned to China in 1900. He conveyed ownership of the property to his successor, and it was used by the British embassy as a summer retreat until ownership was transferred to Tochigi Prefecture in 2010. After many renovations and expansions over the years, the villa is now open to the public as the British Embassy Villa Memorial Park.

Images

Shown are the title pages of Satow's guidebooks that include information on Okunikko: *A Guide Book to Nikko* (1875) and *A Handbook for Travelers in Central and Northern Japan* (1881), cowritten with A. G. S. Hawes (1842–1897). Below those is the second edition (1884) of the handbook, published by John Murray III (1808–1892), and one of the maps in the book.

The photograph shows the south side of Satow's Lake Chuzenji villa, circa 1899.

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Isabella Bird (1831–1904)

Isabella Bird was a British traveler, explorer, and prolific writer known for her long journeys to far-flung destinations, especially her treks through rural and mountainous areas. She visited Nikko and Okunikko during June of 1878 and published an account of her travels in *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*. This book, first published in two volumes in 1880, recounts tales of her journey from Tokyo through northern Japan.

In the book, she credits Mr. Satow with help in seeing many things of interest. In addition, she mentions dining on trout, already a local specialty in Nikko. She traveled as far as Yumoto Onsen, going up the First Iroha Slope Road when it was still known as Chuzenji Road and was a narrow path with many steps cut into it. Before returning to Nikko, she visited Kego Falls and mentions a zigzagging path that descended 200 feet (61 m) to a viewing point. This would have been 15 years before Hoshino Gorobei started clearing his road to the basin of the falls.

Images

Displayed are three printings of Bird's *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*:

(left) 1881 edition

(center) 1900 edition

(right) 2000 edition, in Japanese

Below the books are Bird's own illustration of a scene in a teahouse at Yumoto Onsen (published in *Unbeaten Tracks*) and a map of her travels through Japan