

**Volume 2**

**Number 041R**

**Anglo-Japanese Naval Alliance (1902) II**

**Lead: In the early 1900s a newly powerful Russia was becoming aggressive all along its borders. This pressure hit at British interests especially in the Far East. Britain needed a partner.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: The logical partner for Britain would be another European power such as Germany. The combination would have probably proven a potent one and sufficient to cool Russia's assertive tendencies, but**

**no such alliance came about despite serious discussions. Britain then turned its attention to the Far East, the most vulnerable part of the Empire, farthest from home, at the end of the long colonial lifeline. There Japan was also concerned about Russian expansion specifically into Manchuria and Korea. For two years, in a delicate diplomatic dance, Japan and Britain drew closer to one another.**

**Principal players in this negotiation were Foreign Minister Lansdowne and Tokyo's Ambassador to London Hayashi Tadasu. Lansdowne was afraid Japan and Russian would get together, divide up Manchuria and Korea and leave Britain isolated with**

**its resources and navy stretched too far.**

**By the summer of 1901 the broad outlines of an agreement were coming into focus. Japan wanted a free hand to take over Korea but Britain would not support such a plan. The result was an alliance that kicked in only if one of the parties faced two enemies. Britain would only have to come to the aid of Japan if Japan fought Russia and, say France, not just Russia by itself.**

**Reluctantly Lansdowne and Tadasu brought their governments together and the Anglo-Japanese Naval Alliance was signed on January 30, 1902. As it happened, Britain did**

**not have to come to Japan's aid. When Russia and the Japanese finally squared off in 1905, Japan handily defeated the Russian Navy in the Tsushima Straits and dealt a body blow to Russia's designs on the Far East.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

### Resources

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**Cortazzi, Sir Hugh and Gordon Daniels, eds. *Britain and Japan, 1859-1991*. London, UK: Routledge Publishing Company, 1991.**

**Nish, Ian H. *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: the Diplomacy of Two Island Empires*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1966.**

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