

## Felice Beato's Japan: People

An Album by the Pioneer Foreign Photographer in Yokohama

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### Chronology

#### **Felice A. Beato (ca. 1834–ca. 1909)**

ca. 1834. Beato was born in Corfu during the time the island was under British rule.

1851. Beato purchased his first lens in Paris, France. He traveled to Constantinople with British photographer, James Robertson (1813–1888).

1854-55. James Robertson married Beato's sister.

1855. Beato photographed the British Expedition of the Crimean War. He was joined by Robertson after the birth of Robertson's daughter.

1858. Beato arrived in Calcutta, India. While in Calcutta, he delivered a talk to the Photographic Society of Calcutta. He was a photographer for the Indian Mutiny. He photographed at Lucknow, India.

1859. Beato traveled from Calcutta to Malta.

1860. He returned to Calcutta before traveling to China where he photographed the Second Opium War, landscapes, portraits, and scenes of everyday life. In China, he met Charles Wirgman, correspondent for *Illustrated London News*. Beato photographed the burning of the Taku Forts in China.

1861. Wirgman and Beato arrived in Hong Kong.

1862. Charles Wirgman published the first issue of the newspaper, *The Japan Punch* (1862–1887). Wirgman created a caricature of Beato and named him Count Collodion di Policastro. The Count often appeared in the publication.

1863. Beato arrived in Yokohama and opened a commercial photography studio, F. Beato, Ltd.

1864. Beato served as official British photographer for the Shimonoseki expedition.

1864–1867. Beato and Wirgman formed the partnership Beato and Wirgman, Artist and Photographer.

1866. Yokohama fire destroyed Beato's studio, inventory, and two-thirds of the city.

1867. Beato was admitted to Freemasons Lodge of Yokohama.

ca. 1869. Beato published the two-volume photograph album, *Views of Japan*.

1871. Accompanied U.S. naval expedition to Korea and then Shanghai, China.

1872. Beato photographed the first Japanese railway system between Yokohama and Tokyo.

1873. Appointed consul-general for Greece in Japan. Became an investor in the Grand Hotel erected on the Bund, Yokohama.

1877. Beato sold his studio and inventory to Baron von Stillfried-Ratenicz (1839–1911)

and H. Anderson shortly after Stillfried's studio was destroyed by fire.

1884. Beato left Yokohama via Hong Kong to Port Said, traveled from Suez to Suakim, and photographed the Sudan campaign.

1885. Beato's negatives were sold by Stillfried to Adolfo Farsari (1841–1898) of Farsari and Company when Stillfried and Anderson closed their business. Part of the inventory of Beato's negatives also was sold to Kusakabe Kimbei (1841–1934), assistant to Beato and later Stillfried.

1886. Beato traveled to Great Britain, where he lectured to the London and Provincial Photographic Society. Fire destroyed the photographic studio of Farsari and Company in Yokohama, including Beato's negatives.

1889. Beato arrived in Burma.

1896. Beato operated a business called "The Photographic Studio," which sold photographs, furniture, and curios in Rangoon.

1898. Several photographs credited to "Signor Beato" were published in *The Living Races of Man* by Hutchinson Publishing.

1901. F. Beato, Ltd. took over newly formed and Greek-owned "The Photographic Art Gallery."

1902. F. Beato, Ltd. took over the curio and photographic business of Watts Sheen of Rangoon.

1904. Beato ceased trading as "The Photographic Studio."

1907. F. Beato, Ltd was liquidated.

1908–09. Most probably, Beato died in Burma.

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Beato album courtesy Smith College Museum of Art.

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