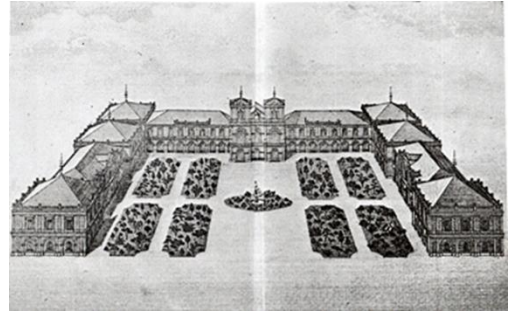


## Foreign Teachers at Kōbu Daigakko

*Kōbu Daigakko* (Institute of Technology) was an education and training institution which became operational around 1873 under *Kobusho* (Ministry of Industry).

In 1863, Chōshū Han secretly dispatched five young samurais to the UK for study, which included Ito Hirobumi (later, Japan's first prime minister), Inoue Kaoru (later, foreign minister), Yamao Yōzo, Inoue Masaru and Endo Kinsuke.



Ito stayed there only for a few months but Yamao and Inoue Masaru studied engineering in the UK for five years before returning to Japan. They supported Ito and Inoue Kaoru, who became the first and the second Chancellor of Industry, in promoting Japanese engineering education. These former Chōshū samurais proposed Japan's first modern engineering education.

When the Iwakura Mission to the West was organized (1871-73), Ito was appointed as one of the Deputy Ambassadors. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Industry was officially established in 1870, and its objectives and administrative details were stipulated in 1871 which included *Kogakuryō* (training school). Yamao Yōzo, who then was a Ministry of Industry official, secured budget for the school with Dajokan Sain (the Executive Branch), and requested Ito, who was traveling with the Iwakura Mission, to hire necessary instructors and purchase equipment in Europe. Ito asked Jardin Matheson & Co. to secure these resources. Candidates were recommended from among best engineering researchers and students at various British universities.

In 1873, the initial team of nine British engineers arrived in Japan, which included Henry Dyer (rector, mechanical engineering, at age 26), William E. Ayrton (physics & electrical engineering), Edward Divers (chemistry), D. H. Marshall (mathematics), E. F. Mondy (design drawing), W. Craigie (English) and three assistants. Before arriving in Japan, Dyer compared different engineering educational systems in Europe and designed his ideal model combining theory and practice. The majority of instructors at Kōbu Daigakko were British. The monthly salary of Dyer was 660 yen and that of Ayrton and Divers was 500 yen each (the monthly salary of prime minister was 600 yen).

Despite high cost, these foreigners were great teachers. Dyer, who had been an outstanding student at the University of Glasgow, managed and taught at Kōbu Daigakko for nine years with strict discipline and rules. Divers was a highly respected chemistry expert who stayed longer in Japan and took over Dyer's position. In contrast, Ayrton was a rough, unpredictable yet superb teacher in electrical engineering who devoted himself to physical experiments, and often severely scolded students and assistants.

Among later instructors at Kōbu Daigakko, John Perry was a practical researcher in mechanics and civil engineering, who brought his students to actual sites for measurement, mapping and modeling. John Milne, a geologist, travelled extensively in Japan to inspect various mines, and started research on earthquakes. Josiah Conder taught architecture for many years and produced many great Japanese architects.

From the first to seventh year (graduation 1879-85), Kōbu Daigakko produced 211 students. Mining, civil engineering and mechanical engineering were most popular disciplines. Students were often influenced by the passion and methods of foreign teachers.

(Source: Hiroyuki Ueda, *The Dawn of Japanese Industry: from Official Envoy Dispatch to China's Sui Dynasty to Kōbu Daigakko*, 1981.)