

Richard Cocks, Head of the British East India Company's Trading Post

Richard Cocks (1566–1624) was head of the British East India Company's trading post in Hirado, in northern Kyushu, from 1613 to 1623, when it closed. In his diary, which gives a detailed account of his duties in Japan, he describes the Great Buddha of Kamakura. Cocks states that the statue was among the most impressive things he saw during his stay in Japan. Situated in a valley between two large hills in the open air (the hall that housed it having been swept away centuries before), the image had been erected four hundred and eighty years before his visit. Cocks estimates the height of the statue as over twenty yards, and the space between its arms and its lap over twelve yards. He describes the figure as sitting with legs folded, "like a tailor." Exaggerating more than a little, he claimed that the head was larger than that of the ancient Colossus of Rhodes, on which it was said thirty men could stand. He estimated that three thousand horses would have been required to transport the metal used in the statue's construction, and concludes that it is a truly amazing sight. (From *The Diary of Richard Cocks*, "The Kamakura Daibutsu, a robed statue.")