

## Edward S. Morse

Morse was born in Portland, Maine, the United States. Since his childhood, he was interested in the collection and classification of shellfish. He became an assistant of the zoologist Louis Agassiz at the age of 21 and started teaching zoology as a professor at Bowdoin College at the age of 33. At the age of 38 in 1877, Morse came to Japan to research brachiopods such as lampshells and lingula and discovered the Omori Shell Mounds while travelling on a train from Yokohama to Shimbashi. He was welcomed by the University of Tokyo as its first zoology professor and is known for introducing the theory of evolution. Morse also carried out extensive activities such as collecting ceramics and studying Japanese architecture.

## Chronology

June 18, 1838: Born in Portland, Maine, the United States

1859–1862, age 21–24: Served as an assistant to zoologist Louis Agassiz

1863, age 25: Married Nellie Owen

1867, age 29: Became a member of the Peabody Academy of Science, newly founded in Salem

1871, age 33: Became a professor at Bowdoin College

1875, age 37: Published his first work, “First Book of Zoology”

1877, age 39, June: Travelled in Japan to research brachiopods (his first trip to Japan)

June: Discovered the Omori Shell Mounds

July: Became a zoology and biology professor at the University of Tokyo

September: Started excavation of the Omori Shell Mounds

November: Returned to the United States

1878, age 40, April: Travelled to Japan with his wife and children (his second trip to Japan)

1879, age 41, July: Published “The Shell Mounds of Omori”

September: Returned to the United States

1880, age 42: Became the director of the Peabody Academy of Science

1882, age 43, June: Travelled to Japan to collect pottery (his third trip to Japan)

1883, age 44, February: Left Japan from Yokohama to Europe in June: Return to the United States

1886, age 48: Published “Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings”

1890, age 52: Donated his pottery collection to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

1892, age 54: Became the manager of the Japanese pottery department of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

1898, age 60: Awarded The Third Rank of the Order of the Rising Sun by the Japanese government

1901, age 63: Published “Catalogue of the Morse Collection of Japanese Pottery”

1915, age 77: Renamed the Peabody Academy of Science to the Peabody Museum of Salem

1916, age 78: Became a honorary director of the Peabody Museum of Salem

1917, age 79: Published “Japan Day by Day”

1922, age 84: Awarded The Second Rank of the Order of the Sacred Treasure by the Japanese government

1925, age 87: Died on December 20 in Salem, Massachusetts

1926: Morse donated his entire personal library collection to the University of Tokyo

### Japan’s First Zoological Research Lab

Soon after Morse came to Japan, he established a marine biological laboratory on Enoshima to research brachiopods during the summer. This became Japan’s first zoological laboratory. A monument to the lab has been erected on the grounds (Enoshima 1-6-32, Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Prefecture).

### Morse’s Travels through Japan

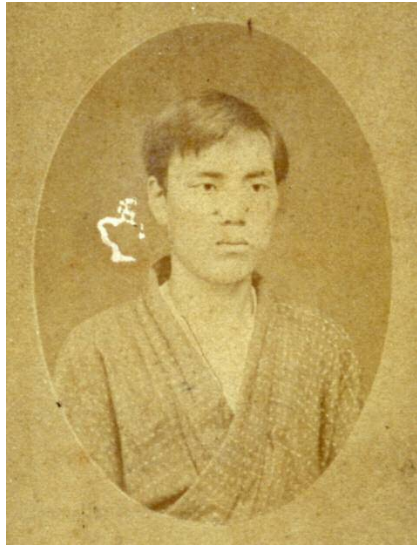
Morse travelled throughout Japan, observed the lives of the Japanese people, and recorded them in both diaries and skillful sketches. Morse’s “Japan Day by Day”, a collection of Morse’s memoirs from Japan, is now known as a record of the common customs of his time. The pottery and tools collected by Morse are housed at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Peabody Essex Museum, and serve as precious resources to understanding the history of Japan.

### Students of Morse

Morse had many students, including Matsura Sayohiko, Sasaki Chujiro, Matsumura Jinzo and Iijima Isao. Matsura Sayohiko also took part in the Omori Shell Mound excavation, but passed away at the age of 22 before the excavation survey report was completed. Morse mourned Matsura’s death, personally covered the cost of his tombstone, and inscribed the following passage in English on the back cover.

“A faithful student, a sincere friend. A lover of nature. Holding the belief that in moral as well as in physical question, ‘the ultimate court of appeal is observation and experiment, not authority.’ Such was Matsura.”

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Matsura Sayohiko (1857–1878)

Born in Kochi Prefecture. Participated in the Omori Shell Mounds exhibition, but passed away at the age of 22 before the excavation survey report completed.

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Sasaki Chujiro (1857–1938)

Born in Fukui Prefecture. Participated in the Omori Shell Mounds Excavation, and erected the “Omori Shell Mounds” monument. Went on to study insects and contributed to modern silkworm cultivation and the paper making field.

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Matsumura Jinzo (1856–1928)

Born in Ibaraki Prefecture. Assisted Morse's research on Enoshima and excavation and research of the Omori Shell Mounds, and became a botanist.

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Iijima Isao (1861–1921)

Born in Shizuoka Prefecture. Carried out the excavation of the Okadaira Shell Mounds with Sasaki Chujiro. Became a prominent figure in Japanese ornithology and parasitology.