THE MANY HOTELS OF THE SARKIES FAMILY

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Category: Did You Know?

Tigran Sarkies, barely in his '20s, opened the Eastern Hotel in the 1880s in Georgetown, Penang. Two years he and his brother Martin opened the Oriental Hotel. Another brother (Aviet) was brought to manage the Eastern, while Tigran extened the Oriental to reopen in 1889 as the Eastern & Oriental or E & O as it was known for generation of planter and officials. In 1891 a fourth brother (Arshag) arrived to improve the E&O until it became known as the best hotel east of Suez. Tigran and Martin opened another hotel in Singapore (1887). They named it Raffles. It had been a boarding school for the Raffles Institution. They expanded (1894) to 75 rooms and another wing 1899. It was the biggest hotel in the Far East. Lucas, son of Martin, headed to Surabaya (1910) and opened the Oranje Hotel in Surabaya, East Java (now Indonesia). Charles Chaplin attended the opening of the refurbished hotel in 1936. During the Japanese invasion it became Hotel Yamoto and barracks.

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