

**Thomas Blake Glover (1838–1911)**

Scotsman Thomas Blake Glover played a crucial role in transforming Japan from an isolated, agrarian society into a modern industrial nation. Glover was one of the first Westerners to enter Japan after the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868) officially opened the country to widescale international trade in 1859. Glover took a position with a company called Jardine, Matheson & Co., but he soon established his own company, Glover & Co., and made a fortune exporting tea, timber, and other products while importing guns, machinery, and steamships.

Glover believed that shipbuilding and mining would be vital to Japan's modernization, and he helped to create the country's first steam-powered slip dock and first modern coal mine. To kickstart these fledging industries, Glover imported state-of-the-art machinery and hired Western engineers. Glover was lifelong friends with Iwasaki Yanosuke (1851–1908), the second-generation president of the Mitsubishi Company, the largest shipping firm in Japan at the time.

While in Nagasaki, Glover had a number of Japanese lovers, and he fathered two children, Kuraba Tomisaburō (1871–1945) and Hana Glover Bennett (1876–1938). Not much is known about Tomisaburō's mother, Kaga Maki (d. 1903), but Hana's mother, Awajiya Tsuru (1851–1899), lived with Glover until her death in 1899.

In 1908, the Japanese government awarded Glover the prestigious Order of the Rising Sun, Second Class for his services to the country. He died of kidney disease in Tokyo on December 16, 1911.