

Thomas B. Glover (1838–1911)

Scottish merchant Thomas Glover was a key figure in the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and the subsequent industrialization of Japan. He was also a fly-fishing enthusiast, which led him to play an important role in the development of Okunikko from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries. He is credited with helping to establish fly fishing as a pastime and sport in Japan.

Glover's early visits to Okunikko were fishing trips to the Yugawa River in 1887 and Lake Chuzenji in 1889. He decided to establish a permanent base there and, in 1893, built a house in the Osaki area on the lake's northeast shore. In 1927, Glover sold the house to Hans Hunter, who made it the headquarters of his new Tokyo Angling and Country Club. It soon became the social center for the diplomatic community that summered in Nikko. They nicknamed the property "Nishi-Rokuban," based on its address: "West, Number Six."

Images

Photographs (from top):

Glover's residence in Tokyo (Azabu area)

Glover with fishing gear

Glover's residence in Tokyo (Shiba area)

Glover's residence in Nagasaki

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Hans Hunter (1884–1947)

Hans Hunter was an avid fisherman, a successful businessman, and a key figure in the social and political development of Lake Chuzenji in the early twentieth century. His Japanese name was Hanta Hansaburo, and he was the second son of Edward H. Hunter (1843–1917) and Hirano Aiko (1851–1939). Edward was a British businessman and shipbuilder and founded Osaka Iron Works, which later became Hitachi Zosen Corporation. Hans bought and developed the Taio Gold Mine in Oita Prefecture, which was the largest producer of gold in the Asia-Pacific region in 1924.

Hans visited Lake Chuzenji in 1923 on an outing with the Marunuma Trout Angling Club. Two years later, he founded the Tokyo Angling and Country Club in Nikko. He bought Glover's Nishi-Rokuban Villa in 1927 to use as the club's headquarters. The club's members included many Western diplomats and Japanese dignitaries, as well as three honorary members who were part of the imperial family. The club hosted frequent social events and was the center of the international community at Lake Chuzenji.

Images

Photographs:

(top) Hans Hunter fishing in the Yugawa River

(bottom) Hans Hunter showing off his catch