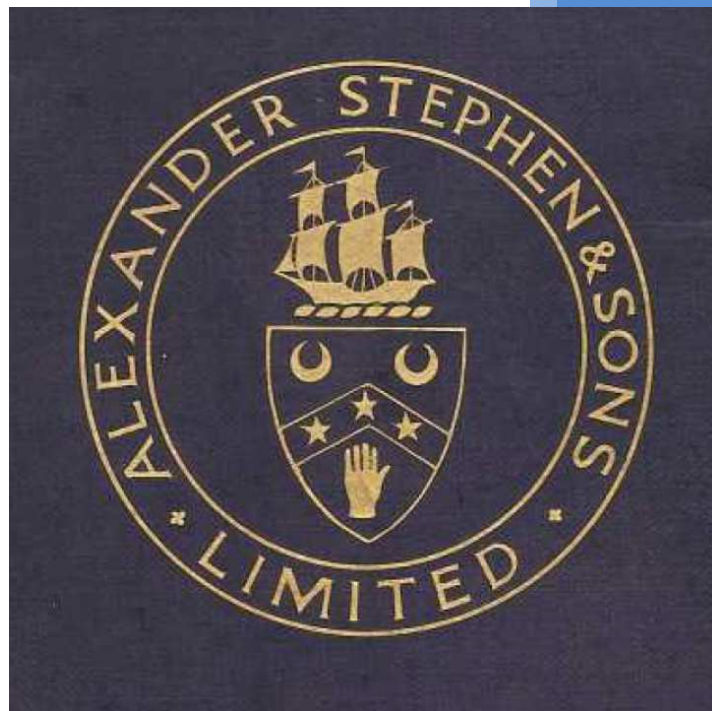


2019-v1

**WILLIAM STEPHEN & CO. /
WILLIAM STEPHEN & SONS, /
ALEXANDER STEPHEN & SONS,
SHIPBUILDERS, YORK
STREET, FOOTDEE,
ABERDEEN, 1793 TO 1830.**



STANLEY

BRUCE

Due to the age of the paintings and photographs in this book they are all considered to be out of copyright, however where the artist or source of the item is known it has been stated directly below it. For any stated as 'Unknown' I would be very happy for you to get in touch if you know the artist or photographer.

Cover photograph – Alexander Stephen & Sons Limited company logo / coat of arms, pre-1877.

This book has been published on an entirely non-profit basis and made available to all free of charge as a pdf. The aim of the book is to make the history of vessels built by William Stephen & Co. / Sons, and Alexander Stephen & Sons available to a wider audience. There is much available on the internet, especially on www.aberdeenships.com which gives much more details from many newspapers not stated in this publication. However, what's currently available is scattered and doesn't readily give the full picture when looking at the perspective from each shipbuilding company.

If you have any comments regarding this book, or any further information, especially photographs or paintings of vessels where I have none. It would be historically good to show at least one for each vessel, and since this is an electronic edition it will be possible to update and include any new information.

I can be contacted at bardofthebroch@yahoo.com

If printing this book, it is best printed as an A5 booklet.

FOREWORD

This page I reserved for our well-known and loved folk singer and comedian Sir Billy Connolly CBE, because of the following connections; he worked as an apprentice welder for the same Stephen family on the Clyde (1958 / 1964) and in page 58, three members of the Connolly family (all thought to be Irish) were passengers on the brig **'Abbotsford'** in 1836 when she sailed from Liverpool to New Orleans, America.

I sent a letter to an agent in London, who claims to act on his behalf, asking if Billy could write the foreword to this book, but after 6-weeks, I have heard nothing, not even an acknowledgement of my letter.

The Welders Song. (Dedicated to Sir Billy Connolly, goes to his Welly Boot tune).

Welders, some are miserable, welders some are swell,
Welders they can shout, and welders they can yell.
And when in a room o' welders, you can always tell,
Who's the clever welder, with the one brain cell.

If it wisnae for the welders, where would we be?
We widnae have any oilrigs, in the North Sea,
There widnae be any ships sailing in the sea,
If it wisnae for the work o' the welders!

Welders can be hairy, welders can be scary,
Welders can be temper-mental or quite contrary,
But underneath their leathers, quite often you will see,
Welders are just ordinary guys, just like you and me.

If it wisnae for the welders, where would we be?
Would we have concrete ships floating on the sea?
Would we still be riveting, or cutting planks from a tree,
If it wisnae for the work o' the welders!

Look at the Big Yin, a welder from the Clyde,
His face makes you grin, and he's kent far and wide.
You've seen him on the telly, you've heard the bugger sing,
Play a ukulele, he'll do anything!

I heard him once talk about the weather, joking about our Scottish rain,
"Course it's blooming raining" he said, it's summer once again.
Even the Big Yin, couldnae weld in the rain,
Welding without a shelter, is just blooming insane.

I'd like to see him welding now, oh what a sight that would be,
But I widnae have him welding, on any ships for me.
He could weld a bit o' railing, or maybe a garden gate,
Something nice an' easy, but nothing too elaborate.

And if it holds together, and disnae fall apart,
I'd shake his hand and say to him, "man I'll give you a start",
£12 per hour, it's not the minimum wage,
A couple o' quid more than you get standing on the stage!

If it wisnae for the welders, where would we be?
We widnae have any oilrigs, in the North Sea,
There widnae be any ships sailing in the sea,
If it wisnae for the work o' the welders.

Stanley Bruce.

This page will be revisited and amended should we hear from Billy.

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2019.**

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Whilst I have taken great care in preparing this publication, I have of course relied on some previous historic information by others. Where conflicting information was found, I have added what seemed the most credible, at least to my mind, I therefore accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

**WILLIAM STEPHEN & CO. /
WILLIAM STEPHEN & SONS /
ALEXANDER STEPHEN & SONS,
SHIPBUILDERS,
YORK STREET,
FOOTDEE,
ABERDEEN,
1793 TO 1830.**

BY

STANLEY BRUCE

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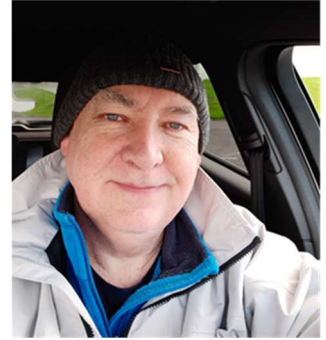
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Introduction

The aim of this book is two-fold; first, to highlight and record the vessels built by William Stephen & Co. / William Stephen & Sons, and Alexander Stephen & Sons, Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, and make this part of Aberdeen's maritime history available to a wider audience, and secondly to show that it was in the North East of Scotland where the Stephen's established themselves as shipbuilders, then taking what they had learned and developed to Arbroath, Dundee, and then to the Clyde. To this end, I have included a timeline with Stephen family history of the 1800's, and other information including a Clyde advert from 1951 as an appendix. (Footdee is known locally as 'Fittie').



I must point out that William Stephen & Sons, was originally established as William Stephen & Co., but the name was changed c1820 when his sons joined the business.

I have included as far as known principal dimensions, owners, tonnages, sailing rigs, Lloyds classification, and details of loss. Also included is any significant or interesting information on the history of the vessels.

Vessels built by the Stephen's in Footdee, Aberdeen were made of wood, and relatively small, especially if compared to what they later built on the Clyde.

The Royal Research Ship, RRS '**Discovery**' built in 1901, although built by the successors of the Stephen's, the Dundee Shipbuilding Co., would probably have been built by many of Stephen's former workers with skills they learnt at Stephen's shipyard. As far as I know none of the wooden vessels built by the Stephen's have survived, however, we are lucky that we can visit the '**Discovery**' in Dundee and see an example of great shipbuilding workmanship. It's a pity we don't have a historic sailing ship to visit here in Aberdeen.

Stanley A. Bruce, BSc., I.Eng., I.Mar.Eng., MIMarEST.

Former shipbuilder,

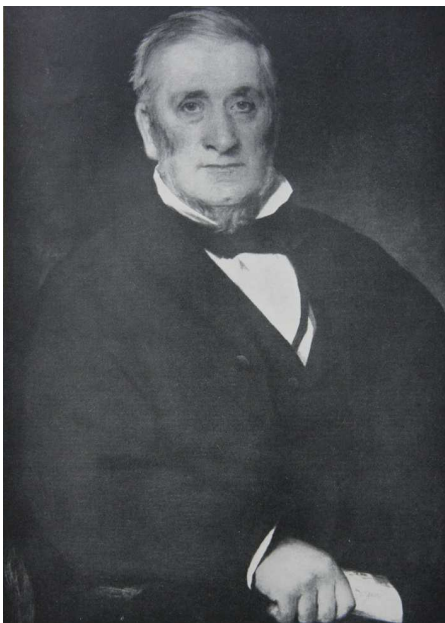
Hall Russell Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, (1980 to 1991).

The Stephen's.

The shipyard of William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen was established c1793 by William Stephen (1759 to 1838), who I believe was born in Footdee. The site of William Stephen's shipyard is roughly where the dry-dock in York Street exists today. c1820 the yard was renamed William Stephen & Sons. In 1824, the yard employed 18 journeymen, 8 apprentices, 2 sawyers, and 2 blacksmiths — a total of thirty hands, so it was a relatively small concern. William Stephen also owned / leased a timber yard on the north side of York Street. The shipyard continued under William's name until 1828 when the lease (approx. £70 pa) was taken over by his second son Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875), and the shipyard was renamed Alexander Stephen & Sons. However, Alexander didn't stay long in Aberdeen, he gave up the Footdee lease in 1830 after taking over the Arbroath yard of his older brother William Stephen (1790 to 1829) in 1829. The Arbroath yard was established c1814 when William returned to Scotland after being freed from a French prison, he was captured during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1842, Alexander Stephen acquired a lease of a yard at Dundee, and in 1843, he opened a shipyard there, where they built 97 vessels. In 1851, he leased a yard at Kelvinhaugh on the Clyde, Glasgow specifically to build iron ships. This company (although later relocated to Linthouse) continued in business affectionately known as Stephens until 1968. Records show that the Stephen's from 1793 to 1968 built a total of around 849 vessels, and if we include vessels built in Burghead, the total could well be in excess of 1,000. Comedian and folk singer Sir Billy Connolly served his apprenticeship as a welder at Stephen's.



*William Stephen
(1759 to 1838).
(Artist unknown).*



*Alexander Stephen
c1860. (Artist unknown).*

Stephen's Timeline

1759: William Stephen (d.1838) was born at Footdee, Aberdeen.

1778: William Stephen (1759 to 1838) aged-19 years, was sent by his father to his uncle Alexander Stephen (1722 to 1793) boatbuilder in Burghead to be an apprentice (Presumably as a shipwright or a carpenter). His uncle Alexander Stephen, who came from a farming background commenced boat-building in Burghead in Moray circa 1750. As far as records show his uncle Alexander Stephen (1722 to 1793) came from Kinneddar Farm in the Parish of Drainie, immediately due south of Lossiemouth.

1784, February: William Stephen (1759 to 1838) aged-25-years, married Ann Smith (c1762 to 1845). (They had eight sons and four daughters).

1787: William Stephen returned to Aberdeen, approximately ten years after going to Burghead, and entered an agreement with James Cochar (d.1793) co-owner of Cochar and Gibbon, Shipbuilders, Footdee, Aberdeen, which read as follows:

Aberdeen, 10th October 1787.

Sir, I do hereby oblige myself to pay you the fee of three pounds sterling money for teaching me the art of ship drafting as you practice it yourself, the one half when entered to said drafting and the other when I can lay down a draft by myself.

I also bind myself to teach no other person the same under the fine of ten pounds sterling money.

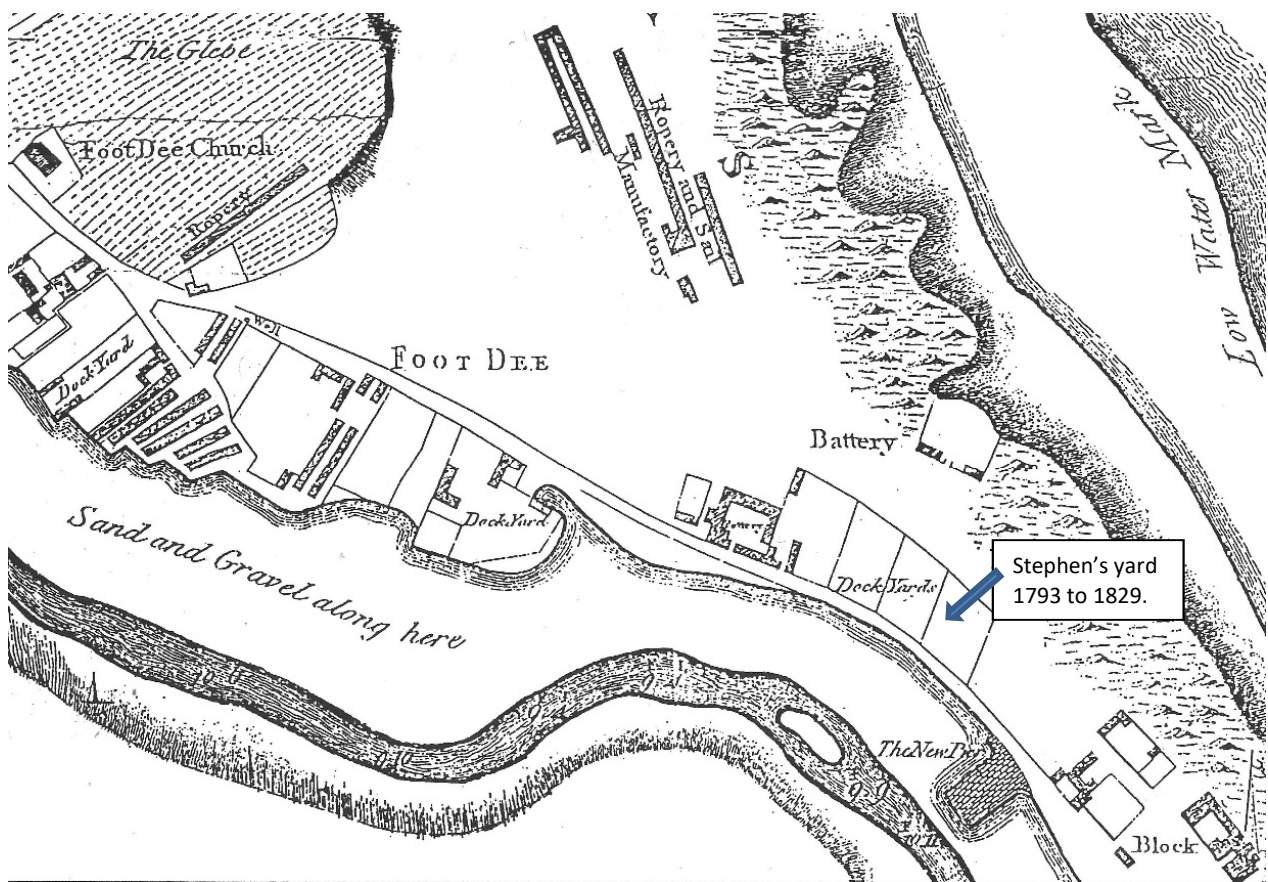
I acknowledge to have received your letter agreeing to these terms and to renew them on stamp paper when required.

Sir, I am yours

(Signed William Stephen).

William had learnt the craft of boat-building at Burghead with his uncle Alexander (1722 to 1793), and from James Cochar (d.1793) he learnt the skills of a ship draughtsman.

1788 / 1789: "A Committee was appointed to receive proposals for persons desiring to lease dockyards, and reported in 1788 that five lots of ground leading to Pocra were available for the purpose. At the same time, Gibbon's house and shipyard were sold by private bargain. If one of the yards was leased by a William Stephen, and would seem to have been slightly inadequate, as an appeal was made to the magistrates for permission to erect props outside the dockyard fence to support the stern of a vessel he was building"¹¹. As per the 1789 map shown below the road to Pocra was originally on the south side of the dockyards, between the yards and the harbour (A little further south than York Street is today).



Milne's Plan, 1789, shows the development of the 'dockyards to the east of the Fish Toun'. Note how the Pottery has been extended.

1789 map of Footdee by Milne.

(Note the other dockyards far left and centre of the map).

1790: William Stephen Junior (d.1829) later shipbuilder in Arbroath was born in Footdee, Aberdeen.

1792 /1793: At this date eleven vessels were built in Aberdeen, amounting to 1,030 tons¹¹. (These figures give an average vessel size of 93.6 tons).

c1793: William Stephen obtained the lease of the Footdee yard in York Street, and established his own shipyard. The early years of his business

were said to have been very difficult, he was probably doing a lot of ship-repair work in order to get established. Later he persuaded his uncle Alexander (1722 to 1793) to leave Burghead and join the Footdee shipyard. The Burghead boatyard continued in business under the management of uncle Alexander's son, Alexander Stephen junior and was still in existence in 1826.

1795, 15th March: Alexander Stephen Junior (d.1875) was born in Footdee, Aberdeen. Later in his life he opened shipyards in Dundee (1843) and on the Clyde (1851),

1798 /1799: At this date 20 vessels were built in Aberdeen, amounting to 1,863 tons¹¹. *(These figures give an average vessel size of 93.15 tons).*

1807, 24th November: Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) aged 12-years, started a 7-year apprenticeship as a ship carpenter with William Stephen & Sons, his father's firm, for more details see **Appendix D**. (His older brother William Stephen Junior, was working at the Footdee yard prior to this date).

1813: William Stephen & Co. built their biggest vessel, the 90-foot long brigantine '**Glory**', 248 tons. At this date, Stephen's employed over 30 men.

1814: William Stephen's eldest son, William Stephen Junior (1790 to 1829) who fought and was captured by the French in the Napoleonic Wars, was released from a French prison, and leased a shipyard for himself at Arbroath adjacent to Arbroath harbour, which was formerly occupied by Mr Kenny, whose family had been building boats in Arbroath from the 1750's

1814: At this date, Aberdeen had 160 vessels, 23,400 tons register. *(These figures give the average vessel size as 146 tons).*

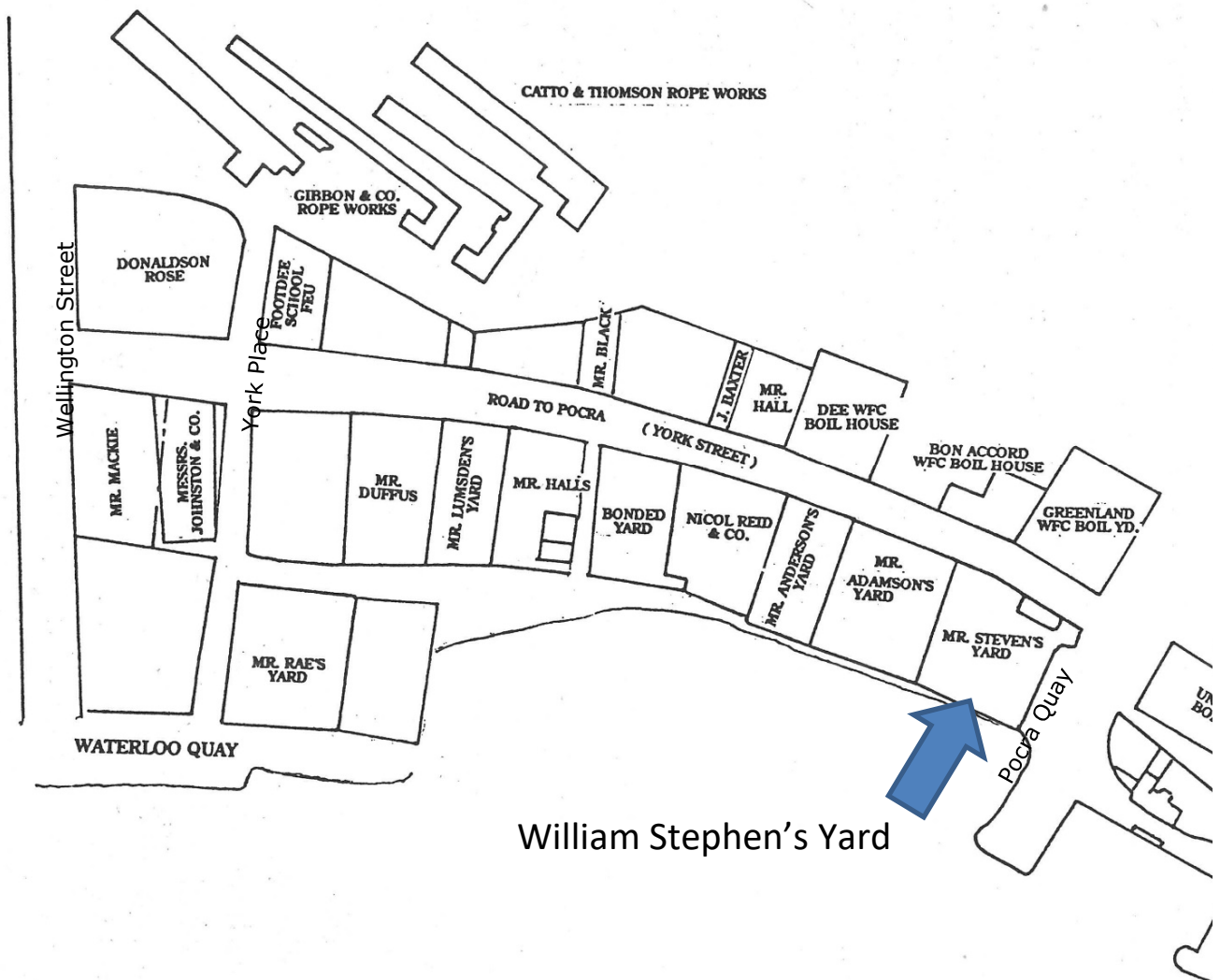
1815, 2nd January: Alexander Stephen aged 19-years, completed his 7-year apprenticeship as a ship carpenter, for more details see **Appendix D**. The number of apprentices in the shipyards at this period, was quite high with approximately one apprentice to every three journeymen. (Saying that, when I served my time as a ship draughtsman at Hall Russell Ltd. from 1980

to 1984, there was roughly four ship draughtsman apprentices to every journeyman).

1815: William Stephen petitioned the Town Council of Aberdeen City to be allowed to erect houses of one storey high on the ground to the east of his already-built house, despite conditions stipulated in the disposition.

1817: twenty vessels, having a gross tonnage of 2,770 tons, were launched in Aberdeen¹². (These figures give the average vessel size as 138.5 tons).

1818: twenty-two vessels, having a gross tonnage of 3,300 tons, were launched in Aberdeen¹². (These figures give the average vessel size as 150 tons).



A Feuing plan of the Footdee Shipyards, 1820.

(Adapted from *The Villages of Aberdeen – Footdee* by Diane Morgan).

c1820: William Stephen's second son, Alexander (1795 to 1875), joined his father (As a partner) in the Footdee yard. It was probably at this date that the company name changed from William Stephen and Co. to William Stephen and Sons.

1824, January 23rd: Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) aged 28-years married 17-year old Elspet Murray (1807 to 1878) in St Nicholas Church, Aberdeen. She was born at Longhaven, Peterhead 3rd March 1807, daughter of Andrew Murray farmer of Longhaven and Helen Mearns. (They went on to have eighteen children; six sons and twelve daughters). **See Appendix C.**

1824: Alexander Stephen started a diary which he kept for the next 30 years.

1824 / 1825: The Aberdeen Post Office Directory gives the home address of William Stephen senior and Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) as No. 8 Wellington Street, Footdee.

1825: The Arbroath shipyard of William Stephen Junior, was facing financial difficulties, and William Stephen Senior was forced to sign a bond taking responsibility of the debts of William Stephen Junior. In 1825, they built a schooner of 216 tons, which was the biggest vessel built in Arbroath up to this date.

1826, 15th November: At Quebec, Canada the brig '**Unicorn**' (164 tons) was cleared for Liverpool (Master Baird).

1826: William's youngest son, 20-year old James Stephen (b.c1806) sailed on the brig '**Unicorn**' (164 tons) built by William Stephen in 1823, but she was lost January 1827 with all hands off Ballankelly on the Irish coast while on passage to Trieste, Italy.

1828, 1st January: William Stephen (1759 to 1838) was declared bankrupt. This was because he had signed a bond in 1825 covering the debts of his son William Stephen Junior in Arbroath, but when this sum was demanded he could not pay it. William Stephen Junior had lost a lawsuit, and William Stephen Senior couldn't cover the bond in full, which resulted in the

creditors taking over the Arbroath yard. The Aberdeen yard was then taken over by his son Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875), and was renamed Alexander Stephen & Sons. Alexander also bore the debts of the Arbroath yard, but this took him seven years to pay off. He also took responsibility for the lawsuit which he lost in court in 1832.

1828: Shortly after being declared bankrupt William Stephen (1759 to 1838) and his wife Ann Smith (c1762 to 1845) moved to Edinburgh to live with their younger son, writer John Stephen (c1805 to 1838).

1828: At this period, Aberdeen had 240 vessels, 37,000 tons register. *(These figures give the average vessel size as 154 tons).*

Alexander Stephen home address was No. 7 Wellington Street, Aberdeen, now demolished. (Aberdeen PO Directory 1829 / 1830).

(Later the home of John Duthie, Shipbuilder (Aberdeen PO Directory 1839 / 1840)).

William Stephen (1759 to 1838) is said to have owed the success of his shipbuilding company largely due to his kindness to his workers. Other more unsympathetic Aberdeen shipbuilding companies couldn't believe how productive Stephen's workers were. His workers were obviously happy ones, I guess the cask of ale he brought from the local brewery for the workers twice a week in hot weather during working hours was his way to show his appreciation for their efforts. He is also said to have on one occasion poured each worker a whisky and water, again during working hours. When a ship ran aground on the Belhelvie Sands, he mustered a band of his men to salvage it, but when he arranged to lodge his men in a nearby farm-house for the night. It is said that he went out of his way to ensure each mans bed had sufficient bedding.

He was also quite a religious man and very often during the lunch break would treat his men to a religious address. If he wasn't finished his address when the bell rang, he would hold them there until he was finished. Some of the apprentices, often to prolong the lunch break are said to have asked difficult questions, but he was not to be drawn. It seems that his preaching had made a great impression, as a former mischievous apprentice James

Smart on his death-bed made a friend promise to tell William Stephen to keep speaking to the men.

1829, 8th December: William Stephen Junior (b.1790) shipbuilder, Arbroath died.

1829: Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) took over the former yard of his deceased older brother William Stephen (1790 to 1829) in Arbroath, adjacent to the harbour.

1830: Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) gave up the lease of the Footdee shipyard in favour of the Arbroath yard, and moved his family to rented accommodation in Arbroath. He became the leading shipbuilder in Arbroath.

The lease of the former Stephen's yard at Footdee was sometime later taken by John Vernon & Co., who also owned the Dee Iron Works on the opposite (north) side of York Street.

1831, 18th April: David Stephen (c1791 to 1831) ironmonger, Aberdeen, son of William Stephen (1759 to 1838) died aged 40-years. **See Appendix F.**

1831 / 1832: The Aberdeen Post Office Directory reads "*Stephen, William (late shipbuilder), No. 30, Blackfriars Street*". (Now demolished).

1832, 21st May: Alexander (Al) Stephen Junior (d.1899) was born.

1836, July: Alexander Stephen bought two houses in Ladyloan, Arbroath for £290, 10 shillings.

1838, 17th February: John Stephen (b. c1805), writer, Edinburgh, son of William Stephen (1759 to 1838) died, aged 33-years. William Stephen senior and his wife Ann Smith both moved to live in Arbroath.

1838: Alexander Stephen bought the barque '**Leipzig**' (223 tons) at Hull for £1,550. She was bought specially to transport timber to the Arbroath yard for shipbuilding purposes. She is known to have made passages to The Baltic, St. Petersburg and Archangel (Russia) for Russian woods, to Moulmein (Modern day Mawlamyine), Burma for teak, and to the Black Sea.



*"Leipzig" entering Naples Bay.
Owned by the Stephens for many years and used to bring home timber for the shipyard.*

Barque 'Leipzig' entering Naples Bay. Taken from 'A Shipbuilding History 1750 – 1932, Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd.' (1932). (Artist unknown).

She did this job until at least 1851 and is said to have saved the Stephen's a lot of money (or made, depending on how you look at it).

(In 1848, she carried timbers for the construction of the Pile Light, Dundee, which she carried from Marseilles, France, under the command of Captain Thomas Cappon).

Teak was considered the best timber to build ship hulls, and ships built of teak were given a high classification by Lloyds Register of Shipping.

1838, 21st November: William Stephen (b. 1759) died aged 79-years, he is buried in the St. Clements Kirkyard, Footdee, Aberdeen. **See Appendix B.**

1839: The lease of the former Stephen's shipyard in York Street, Footdee was taken on by Walter Hood (1802 to 1862), who established the shipbuilding business of **Walter Hood & Co.** This business operated until 1881, and built many fine vessels including the 3-masted clipper ship 'Thermopylae' (947 tons). *(An earlier book in this series titled 'Walter Hood & Co., Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1839 to 1881' was published in August 2018, and is available to read online or download free from 'The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen' webpage at www.electricscotland.com).*

1839: Alexander Stephen & Sons, Arbroath built their first fully rigged ship the 3-masted '**John Mitchell**' (412 tons) for John Mitchell, Glasgow, she was the biggest vessel they built in Arbroath, the third vessel they had built for John Mitchell, and the first fully rigged ship built in Arbroath.

1839: Work commenced enlarging and improving Arbroath Harbour.

1840: Alexander Stephen moved his family into a large new house at Ladyloan, Arbroath, which overlooked the shipyard.

1840: Alexander Stephen & Sons operated from a yard aside the Bell Tower Lighthouse, Arbroath.

1841, 7th June: Alexander Stephen's 3-year old daughter Elizabeth (b.1838) was accidentally killed by a circular saw while playing in his Arbroath shipyard.

1841: Alexander Stephen lengthened his own vessel '**Leipzig**' (223 tons) by 13 feet.

1842: William Stephen Junior (1826 to 1894), started an apprenticeship at the family firm as a carpenter.

c1842: James Stephen (b.1828), started an apprenticeship at Millar & Richardson, Ironmongers, Edinburgh.

1842: Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) acquired a lease of a shipyard in Dundee, which was formerly leased by David Calman and established c1840. The river frontage of the yard was 223 feet, and had three slipways. One of the reasons why Alexander Stephen left Arbroath was the coming of the railway. The railway passed through the back of his shipyard, which he was compensated financially for, but the loss of this space is said to have made his shipyard somewhat inadequate. Stephen's had, I believe built 32 vessels at Arbroath between 1830 and 1842, but the greatest part of his work there consisted of ship-repair work, including the restoration of the Inchcape Bell boat.

1843, February: Alexander and Elspeth Stephen's 12-week old daughter Ruth (born 13th November 1842) died, it is said she was slept on by her nanny.

1843, May: Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875) sold his Arbroath shipyard to his nephew William Stephen, only son of his late brother William the original founder of the Arbroath shipyard. He then opened Alexander Stephen & Sons, at the former shipyard of David Calman at the Panmure Yard, west end of Marine Parade, Dundee. It is said the company initially found it difficult to win new shipbuilding contracts but kept busy with ship-repair and conversion work. This shipyard continued in business until 1893, and built vessels from wood, iron, and steel; initially clippers, then steamships, and earned a reputation for building fine whaling ships.

1844: The first vessel was launched at the Dundee Panmure Yard, she was a wooden-hulled brig named '**Diana**' (191 tons), built for A. Blives of Dundee.

1844: Alexander Stephen had a floating dock installed at the Dundee Panmure Yard (Thought to be one of the first of its kind).

1845: Ann Smith (b.c1762) wife of William Stephen (1759 to 1838) died aged 83-years.

1847: There were five shipyards in Dundee at this date, including that of former Aberdeen shipbuilder **Thomas Adamson** who had formerly co-owned a shipyard at Footdee.

1850: The 3-masted ship '**Amazon**' (800 tons) was launched from the Dundee shipyard, this was the biggest vessel built on the Tay at this date. She was classed 16A1 by Lloyds Register of Shipping, which was a very high Classification.

1851: Alexander Stephen and two of his sons, Alexander (Al) Stephen (1832 to 1899), and James Stephen (b.1828) signed a 20-year lease of a yard at



*Alexander (Al) Stephen Junior. (1832 to 1899).
(Artist unknown).*

Kelvinhaugh on the Clyde, Glasgow, specifically to build iron ships. William Stephen (1826 to 1894) was left to run the Dundee shipyard. The Clyde company (although later relocated to Linthouse) continued in business affectionately known as Stephens and continued in business until 1968 on the Clyde. Comedian and folk singer Billy Connolly (b.1942) served his apprenticeship as a welder at Stephens and worked there from 1958 to c1964.

1856: William Stephen in Arbroath built the biggest vessel ever built in Arbroath. She was the 3-masted fully rigged ship '**Neville**' (830 tons).

1857: William Stephen (b.c1818) owner of the Arbroath shipyard died suddenly, aged only 39-years, and the Arbroath shipyard closed.

1857, 1st September⁹: Alexander Stephen senior left his two sons Alexander (Al) Stephen (1832 to 1899) and James Stephen (b.1828) to run the Kelvinhaugh shipyard. (The former site of the Kelvinhaugh shipyard is now Yorkhill Quay). He returned to Dundee to continue operating the Dundee yard with his eldest son William (1826 to 1894).

1859, 27th April: Alexander (Al) Stephen (1832 to 1899) assumed complete control of the Kelvinhaugh shipyard⁹.

1860, December: John Stephen (1835 to 1917) younger brother of Alexander Stephen (1832 to 1899) became a partner in the Linthouse company, retaining 25%.

1862, 29th August: The 3-masted ship '**John Lidgett**' (770 tons) was launched by Alexander Stephen & Co., Kelvinhaugh. She was their first composite-hulled Tea Clipper. In Aberdeen in 1863 **Alexander Hall & Co.** launched 3 composite hulled vessels the '**Yang-tze**' (688 tons), the '**Black Prince**' (750 tons), and the '**Reindeer**' (964 tons). It was 1867 before **Walter Hood & Co.**, Aberdeen built their first composite ship the '**Thyatira**' (962 tons). None of the other Aberdeen shipbuilders built composite-hulled ships.

1868: The Dundee shipyard was totally destroyed by fire.

1870: Due to limitations regarding the size of vessels that could be built at the Kelvinhaugh yard, as well as the impending expiry of the 20-year lease, the Glasgow side of the business moved to a new site down-river at Linthouse. The first vessel launched at Linthouse was the iron-hulled screw steamer '**Glendarroch**' (1,509 tons) launched 24th November 1870⁹.

1873: William Stephen (1826 to 1894) assumed complete control of the Dundee shipyard⁹.

1875, 24th April: Alexander Stephen (b.1795) died at Broughty Ferry.

1881: Walter Hood & Co., which occupied the former Footdee yard of William Stephen / Alexander Stephen was closed, and subsequently taken over by shipbuilders **Alexander Hall & Co.**

1881: The Stephens' in Dundee opened the Arctic Tannery abutting the north-east corner of the Tidal Basin, eventually run by **William Stephens & Sons.** They advertised themselves as 'Tanners, Curriers and Schoolbag Manufacturers'.



'Terra Nova'
(Herbert Ponting, 1911).

1884: Alexander Stephen & Sons, Dundee built their last sealer the '**Terra Nova**' (**764 tons**). Terra Nova in Latin means 'new land'. She is famous for carrying the 1910 British Antarctic Expedition, which was the last expedition by Robert Falcon Scott RN.

1894, 14th September: Alexander Stephen & Sons, Dundee, launched the steel-hulled 4-masted barque '**Pitlochry**'. She was built to their own account, and was 320 feet long and 3,088 tons, the largest sailing vessel built on the Tay at the time.

1894: Stephen's Dundee shipyard closed. Records show that from 1843 to 1894 they had built 97 vessels, approximately an average of two per year. The biggest vessel they built was the '**Pitlochry**' (3,088 tons). Amongst the other vessels built were eighteen strongly built whaling ships, and several more sealers; Dundee at the time was a prominent whaling port.

1894: After the death of William Stephen (1826 to 1894), the lease of the Dundee Panmure shipyard was taken on by the Dundee Shipbuilders Co., Ltd. In 1901, they built RRS '**Discovery**' (357 tons), which is currently one of Dundee's most important visitor attractions and well worth a visit, I've been four times.



RRS 'Discovery'. (S. Bruce, 2004).

Summary of Vessels Built by the Stephen Family.

I have compiled the following table from what I have found during my research, so these values are the minimum numbers, as potentially there could be more.

Place	Vessels Built	Dates
Burghead:	Unknown.	c1750 ≥1826.
Aberdeen:	35	1793 to 1830.
Arbroath (William):	20 to 25	1814 to 1829.
Arbroath (Alexander):	33	1830 to 1843.
Dundee:	97	1843 to 1894.
Kelvinhaugh, Clyde:	147	1851 to 1870.
Linthouse, Clyde:	537	1870 to 1932.

APPROX. TOTAL = 869 (plus the Burghead number).

In total the Stephen's (Based on two builds per year at Burghead) may have built somewhere around 1,000 vessels.

Lloyds Ship Classifications (At this period).

Lloyds Register printed their first Register of Ships in 1764. This register from 1775 showed a grading for every vessel, this grading gave both underwriters and merchants an indication of the condition of the vessels they were insuring and chartering.

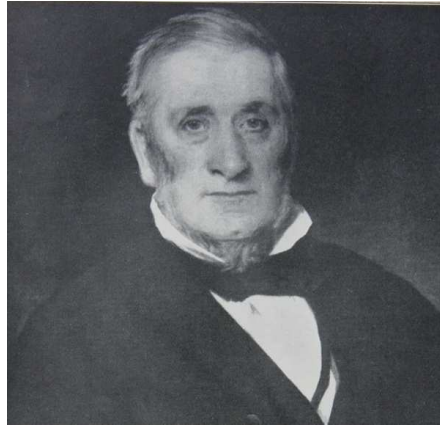
The hull was classified with letters, A, E, and I. (A being the highest).

Equipment was classified with numbers 1 or 2. (1 being the highest).

Thus, the best classification achievable was 'A1'.

In 1834 the classification numbering was changed, and the classification was preceded by the number of years that class could be held, e.g. '12A1'.

There is a fuller description on this in my Walter Hood book.



*Alexander Stephen c1860.
(Artist unknown).*

Alexander Stephen (In Doric).

His faither wis a shipbuilder,
As wis his brither,
A' workin' doon at Fittie,
Biggin' widden ships thegither.

Faither an' sons,
Alangside ither skilled han's,
Biggin' ships oot o' wid,
Fae widden models an' plans.

The Stephen's biggit 'em,
An' sailed in 'em tee,
They hid a gweed reputation,
In Fittie, an' at 'e sea.

Carpenters, shipwrights, an' sailors,
Makin' tree's intae boats,
Sailin' 'e siven sea's,
In onything 'at floats!

Stanley Bruce.

Ship Repair Work.

In addition to the new build vessels listed above, the Stephen's carried out ship-repair work. An example of this is the lengthening of the 3-masted whaling ship '**Oscar**' by 16 feet c1813. This would have included cutting the ship in half, moving one half away from the other by 16 feet, fitting a new keel section which would have been carefully scarphed to the two parts of the existing keel, then erecting new frames, followed by hull planking, deck beams and deck planks. Unfortunately, the '**Oscar**' was wrecked 1st April 1813 during a gale in Greyhope Bay, Torry, immediately behind the Aberdeen Harbour breakwater, 42 crew drowned, only 2 survived. A full list of names and addresses of the 44 men can be found in the Aberdeen and North East Scotland Family History Society (ANESFHS) Journal No. 18, Spring 1986. Become a member like me, and you can access the journals on the society website. www.anesfhs.org.uk

I worked on the lengthening of the '**Buffalo**' (10,987 tons) by Hall Russell Ltd. for P&O Ferries in 1988. This seemed a relatively straight forward job, but turned out to be quite a task.



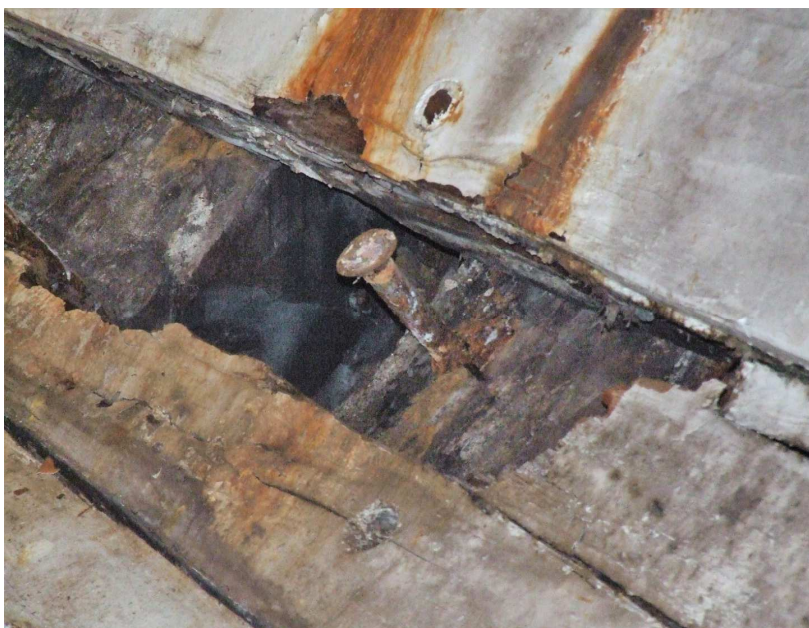
*Scarphed connection on the bulwark of RRS '**Discovery**'. (S. Bruce).*

Wooden ships, even the most well-maintained could still rot. Ship-owners had to be vigilant and carry out regular inspections and maintenance.

Timber

William Stephen for some reason didn't like Aberdeenshire oak, so he is said to have tended to build his vessels using Italian and English oak, the English oak was transported from the Thames. He is also known to have used American and Scandinavian pine, Canadian elm, and Burma teak.

He had his own vessels; the brig 'Bolivar' (223 tons) built by William Stephen in 1825, the brigantine 'Unicorn' (164 tons) built by William Stephen in 1823, and the barque 'Leipzig' (223 tons), which he used to transport timber to build ships.



Typical area where a section of completely rotten wood has been removed on the inside of the hull of a sailing ship. (S. Bruce).

Lloyds vessel classifications / years assigned were given depending on the type of timber used, basically the better the timber the higher the classification. The highest classification at this period was 16A1 (16-years.)

Timber Hulls – Years assigned to woods used by the Stephen's in Aberdeen, adapted from LRS table in the book 'Wooden Ship Building' by Charles Desmond¹⁰.

Type of Wood	LRS Years Assigned
Burma Teak.	16 (East India Teak)
English Oak.	12
Scottish Oak,	12 (English Oak).
Italian Oak.	9 (Danish Oak)
Scandinavian Pine.	9 (French Red Pine).
American Pine.	8
Canadian Elm.	6

Wood's in brackets are the nearest I could find.

Vessels Built by William Stephen & Co.

William Stephen & Co. commenced shipbuilding in 1793, and by 1813 are said to have built nine brigs and the ship 'Elizabeth'. Unfortunately, I could only positively identify one brig the 'Mary' (1810), so the other eight are currently missing from this table. 18 vessels in total as follows:

Date	Name	Type	Tons	Owner	L x B x D
1793 to 1813	Unknown 8 off.	Brigs	c90 to c150	Unknown	Unknown
1810	Mary.	Brig	138	William Stephen Senior.	73', 1" x 21', 6" x 12', 5".
<1813	Elizabeth.	Ship	Unknown	Unknown.	Unknown
1813	Glory.	Brigantine	248	McGregry.	90', 1" x 25', 11" x 16', 6".
1814	Blucher.	Brigantine	124	A. Wilson.	69', 1" x 21', 1" x 11', 3".
1814	Adelphi.	Brigantine	122	Unknown.	68', 22 x 20', 10" x 11', 7".
1815	Wellington.	Brig	211	Unknown.	84', 6" x 24' x 16' approx.
1817	Duncan Forbes.	Brigantine	133	Unknown.	68', 1" x 21', 10" x 12', 4".
1817	Olive.	Schooner	89	Unknown.	61', 3" x 19' x 9', 10".
1818	Star.	Brigantine	172	Unknown.	79', 1" x 23' x 14', 3".
1818	Ann.	Brigantine	196	Unknown.	78', 10" x 24', 4" x 15'

Vessels Built by William Stephen & Sons.

The company name c1820 was changed to William Stephen & Sons, a further 14 vessels were built under the new name as follows:

Date	Name	Type	Tons	Owner	L x B x D
1819	Latona.	Brigantine	220	Gibbon & Co., Aberdeen.	84', 9" x 24', 11" x 15', 9"
1820	Arethusa.	Brigantine	236	Fleming & Co., Aberdeen.	87', 7" x 25', 1" x 15', 11"
1821	Unknown	Schooner	82	Unknown	56', 9" x 18', 7" x 10', 1"
1823	Unicorn.	Brigantine	164	William Stephen, James Stephen, & John Fleming, Aberdeen.	75', 11" x 22', 6" x 14', 5"
1823	Enterprize.	Schooner	83	Various, Aberdeen.	56', 7" x 19' x 10', 7"
1824	Atlantic.	Brig	216	Catto & Co., Aberdeen.	84', 9" x 24', 3" x 16'
1824	Sir R. Barclay.	Brigantine	111	Various, Aberdeen.	66' x 20' x 11', 1"

Vessels Built by William Stephen & Sons. (Continued).

Date	Name	Type	Tons	Owner	L x B x D
1825	Earl of Fife.	Brig	113	Various, Aberdeen & Montrose.	66', 4" x 20', ½" x 11', 6"
1825	Bolivar.	Brig	223	Various Aberdeen merchants & William & Alexander Stephen.	84', 10" x 24', 6" x 16', 6"
1826	James Hadden.	Brig	155	A. Mortimer.	74', 3" x 21', 11" x 13', 3"
1826	Matchless.	Brigantine	188	A. Mortimer.	79', 7" x 23', 3" x 15', 5"
1826	Aid.	Schooner	121	Mr. Chapel.	67', 2" x 20', 4" x 12', 7"
1827	Young George.	Sloop	64	Captain Ritchie, Roseheartly, Aberdeenshire.	50', 1" x 17', 6" x 9', 4"
1827	Henry Michie.	Schooner	82	R. Leitch.	57', 8" x 18', 3" x 10', 9"

Vessels Built by Alexander Stephen & Sons.

Alexander Stephen took over his father's business in 1828, after his father ran into financial difficulties. Only three vessels were built in Footdee before Alexander Stephen moved in 1829 to Arbroath where he took over his late brother William's shipyard, and gave up the Footdee lease in 1830.

Date	Name	Type	Tons	Owner	L x B x D
1828	Rosalinda.	Brig.	129	Mr. Clarkson.	68', 3" x 20', 9" x 12', 6"
1828	Sarah.	Smack.	40	James Dick, merchant, Aberdeen.	43', 7" x 14', 10" x 8', 1"
1829	Abbotsford.	Brig.	121	Robert Spring, baker, 7 others, Aberdeen.	65', 4" x 20', 9" x 12', 5"

Eight Unknown Brigs (1793 to 1813).

William Stephen & Co. between 1793 and 1813 built eight vessels, said to be mostly brigs. I have a list of 123 vessels built in Aberdeen at this period with unknown builders, which is likely to include these eight vessels, but unfortunately, I could not name them. If you can, then please let me know using the e-mail address at the front of the book.

There is a brig '**Aurora**' (127 tons) launched April 1816, built of English Oak, and classified by LRS 8A1. I have included her in an appendix as there is a gap in the Stephen's list for this date and she may possibly have been built by them.

Vessels Built by William Stephen & Co.

Mary (1810).

It is thought that she was built speculatively by William Stephen as a coaster to carry general cargo. She was probably sold after completion, unfortunately I have no details of her new owners.

Name(s)	Mary.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1810.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	William Stephen senior, shipbuilder (62). Other shareholders: Alexander Webster, and John Ewing, both advocates, and Peter Duguid, banker, a quorum of executors of Peter Ritchie, late merchant in Aberdeen, also Alexander Chivas, banker, and John Rae*, merchant (1). The other Executors of the said Peter Ritchie, and John Morrison, shipmaster, Aberdeen (1).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	138 tons.
Length	73 feet, 1 inch (22.28m).
Breadth	21 feet, 6 inches (6.55m).
Depth	12 feet, 5 inches (3.78m).
Construction	Wood. (Carvel built).
Figurehead	Not fitted.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1824: shipmaster Joseph Machray.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

**John Rae was a timber merchant, and had a yard at York Place, Footdee.*

Elizabeth (<1813).

She was a ship built by William Stephen & Co. before 1813, but unfortunately, I have no further details.

Glory (1813).

She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, London, Belfast, Gibraltar, Bahia (Brazil), and to Nevis & London, Demerara (Caribbean). At 248 tons GRT she was the biggest vessel built by William Stephen in Aberdeen.

She is also known to have carried immigrants to Canada, probably returning with a cargo of timber, as follows:

Date	From	To	Information
1818	Kings Lynn / London 23 rd July.	Quebec / Montreal 31 st August.	
1824	Belfast 20 th June.	Quebec 4 th August.	153 settlers.
1825	Belfast	Quebec	
1826	London	Halifax	
1826	Dublin 29 th June.	Quebec 25 th August.	
1827	Bristol 28 th April.	Quebec 17 th June.	

Continued.....

Glory (1813). Continued.

Name(s)	Glory.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1813.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	McGregor.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	248 tons.
Length	90 feet, 1 inch (27.46m).
Breadth	25 feet, 11 inch (7.90m).
Depth	16 feet, 6 inches (5.03m).
Construction	Wood. (Hull sheathed in copper). Iron cables.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class A1. 1823: Lloyds Classification reduced From A1 to E1*.
Other information	1818: damage repairs recorded. 1814 / 1822: owned by McGregor. 1823 / 1824: owned by Catto & Co., Aberdeen. 1825: owned by Saunders & Co. 1826: owned by Martin, part new keel fitted.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

* See page 23 for information on Lloyds Classification symbols.

Blucher (1814).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Leith, Alloa, Scarborough, Yarmouth, London, Liverpool, and Cowes, she also made passages to Oporto (Portugal), St. Petersburg (Russia), Haiti, and South Dominica (Caribbean), Cadiz (Portugal), Quebec (Canada), Charente (France), and the Straits of Gibraltar.

Name(s)	Blucher.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1814.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	1815: owned by A. Wilson, London (64) . (Described as a London coaster).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	124 tons.
Length	69 feet, 1 inch (21.06m).
Breadth	21 feet, 1 inch (6.43m).
Depth	11 feet, 3 inches (3.43m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1819: she made a passage from Belfast, Ireland to the Port of Quebec, Canada, carrying 154 immigrant settlers, master John Grayson. 1819: she made a passage from Aberdeen to Montreal, Canada. <i>(Probably with immigrants outward bound and timber homeward bound)</i> . 1824: owned by J. C. White. 1839: owned by J. Frost & registered in London. 1839: lengthened, new tonnage 125 tons. 1840: she is described as a London collier. 1841: owned by J. Hannen. 1843: owned by Clarke & Co.
Date Scrapped / Lost	11 th February 1843: on passage to London (in ballast), she was wrecked on rocks near Morpeth, England. Three crew members drowned.

Adelphi (1814).

She was built as a coaster, to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Liverpool, Bristol, Newport, Brazil, and to Barbados and Jamaica (Caribbean).

Name(s)	Adelphi.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1814.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Unknown.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	122 tons.
Length	68 feet, 2 inches (20.78m).
Breadth	20 feet, 10 inches (6.35m).
Depth	11 feet, 7 inches (3.53m).
Construction	Wood. (Hull sheathed in copper).
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1817: registered in Barbados. 1819: owned by Hayes & Co. 1820: owned by J. Roose, Liverpool. 1821: fitted with iron chain cables.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Wellington (1815).

She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at London, Liverpool, Lynn, Norfolk, Pernambuco (Brazil), Newfoundland (Canada), Barbados (Caribbean), and Miramichi, New Brunswick (Canada).

Name(s)	Wellington.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit
Launch Date	1815.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	1816: owned by Donaldson Rose & Co. , timber merchants, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	211 tons.
Length	Approx. 84 feet, 6 inches. (25.76m).
Breadth	Approx. 24 feet (7.32m).
Depth	Approx. 16 feet (4.88m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class A1.
Other information	June 1815: she carried six emigrants to Miramichi, Canada, this was possibly her maiden voyage. 1816 / 1824: master A. Stephen ; owned by Donaldson Rose & Co., timber merchants, Footdee, Aberdeen. 1824 / 1826: owned by Low & Co. 1825: master – George Gilbertson, No. 11 Commerce Street, Aberdeen. 1827 / 1830: owned by Watson & Co. and described as a Lynn Coaster (Norfolk).
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Duncan Forbes (1817).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Liverpool, London, Messina, Sicily (Italy), Fayal Island, Azores (Portugal), Aruba (Caribbean), Brazil, Buenos Aires (Argentina), and the Straits of Gibraltar.

Name(s)	Duncan Forbes.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1817.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	1818: owned by Ritchie & Co.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	133 tons.
Length	68 feet, 1 inch (20.75m).
Breadth	21 feet, 10 inches (6.65m).
Depth	12 feet, 4 inches (3.76m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class A1.
Other information	1822: 8/64 shares belonging to sequestered estate of Anthony Wilson, for sale in the Lemon Tree Tavern, Aberdeen at public roup, upset price £90, which would make the ship worth around £720. 1819 / 1823: owned by A. Forbes & Co. 1824 / 1825: owned by Wilson & Co.
Date Scrapped / Lost	20 th January 1826: she made passage from the Baltic for Gibraltar with half a cargo of tobacco, but was lost on route, location / details unknown.

Olive (1817).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Leith, Alloa, Liverpool, Kings Lynn, London, Yarmouth, Belfast, and Dublin (Ireland). She also made passages to The Straits of Gibraltar, Hamburg (Germany), Africa, La Guaira, (Venezuela), Naples (Italy), Messina, Sicily (Italy), Tampico (Mexico), Gallipoli (Turkey), and Jamaica (Caribbean).

Name(s)	Olive.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1817.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	R. Barnett & Co.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	89 tons.
Length	61 feet, 3 inches (18.67m).
Breadth	19 feet (5.79m).
Depth	9 feet, 10 inches (3.00m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	<p>1818 / 1821: owner and master R. Barnett.</p> <p>1820, 26rd January: The Aberdeen Journal reported that <i>“On 23 January ‘Olive’, schooner, of Aberdeen, in taking the harbour owing to the great swell and wind blowing strong from SW, got upon the stones of the lower point of the north pier, where she must have gone to pieces had she not received immediate assistance and been hauled up above the upper flag staff, where she now lies”.</i></p> <p>1822: owner and master J. Thompson.</p> <p>1824: owned by J. Fleming.</p> <p>1825: owned by Perrier & Co.</p> <p>1826: owned by Cullin.</p> <p>1827: owned by Perrier & Co.</p> <p>1828: owned by W. Kerr; Goodletter.</p> <p>1830 / 1831: owner and master G. Quagle.</p> <p>1832: owner and master Tobin.</p>
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Star (1818).

She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, London, Plymouth, Milford Haven, and made passages to the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Calcutta (India), and to Barbados (Caribbean).

Name(s)	Star.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1818.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Unknown.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	172 tons.
Length	79 feet, 1 inch (24.10m).
Breadth	23 feet (7.01m).
Depth	14 feet, 3 inches (4.34m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1822 / 1824: owned by J. Bishop. 1848 / 1849: owned by W. Irvin, North Shields ⁶ . (Listed as 211 tons).
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

In 1819, a vessel with this name made a passage to Quebec, Canada, her master was John Matheson.

1824 / 1825 Aberdeen Post Office Directory - Matheson, Capt. John, of the 'Eliza' schooner, home address No. 9, Constitution Street.

1827 / 1828 Aberdeen Post Office Directory - Matheson, John, late shipmaster, home address (lodgings) No. 9, Constitution Street.

Ann (1818).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded between Aberdeen and London.

Name(s)	Ann.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1818.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Unknown.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	196 tons.
Length	78 feet, 10 inches (24.03m).
Breadth	24 feet, 4 inches (7.42m).
Depth	15 feet (4.57m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	April 1820: she was wrecked at South Uist, Outer Hebrides, Scotland. Grid Ref: 57.17N. 07.20W.

Latona (1819).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Leith, South Shields, Plymouth, Falmouth, Liverpool, and Belfast. She is also known to have made passage to Riga (Latvia), Quebec (Canada), and Arkangel (Russia).

Name(s)	Latona.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1819.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Alexander Gibbon (12), James Gibbon (8), and William Pirie (4), all merchants, Aberdeen. Other shareholders: Alexander Pirie (4), Patrick Pirie (4), John Smith (8), George Storey (4) all merchants. James Grant, advocate (4), William Stephen, shipbuilder (4) , William Lawrie, Clerk (4), William Forsyth, druggist (4), and David Scott, Captain Royal Navy (4), all Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	220 tons.
Length	84 feet, 9 inches (25.83m).
Breadth	24 feet, 11 inches (7.59m).
Depth	15 feet, 9 inches (4.80m).
Construction	Wood. (Carvel built).
Figurehead	Woman's bust.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1825: master – John Thomson, No. 21, James Street, Aberdeen. 1832 / 1833: owned by Smith & Co.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

The Gibbon family were prominent Aberdeen shipbuilders & ship-owners.

Vessels Built by William Stephen & Sons.

c1820 the company name was changed to include William Stephen's sons.

Arethusa (1820).

She was built as a general cargo carrier and is known to have traded at the West Indies, i.e. Jamaica, and Barbados, making passages from London.

Name(s)	Arethusa.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	April 1820.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Fleming & Co. (64). Shareholders: John Fleming, and others, Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	236 tons.
Length	87 feet, 7 inches (26.70m).
Breadth	25 feet, 1 inch (7.65m).
Depth	15 feet, 11 inches (4.85m).
Construction	Wood. (Hull sheathed in copper).
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1826: owned by Bailey. 1827: owned by Rutherford.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Unknown (1821).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo; however, we have no record of her name or her owners. She may have been built speculatively, then sold and renamed after her completion.

Name(s)	Unknown.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit. <i>(Information based on other similar vessels).</i>
Launch Date	1821.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Unknown.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	82 tons.
Length	56 feet, 9 inches (17.30m).
Breadth	18 feet, 7 inches (5.66m).
Depth	10 feet, 1 inch (3.07m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Unicorn (1823).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Liverpool and London. She also traded at Buenos Aires (Argentina), Havana, (Cuba), and at Trieste (Italy).

Name(s)	Unicorn.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1823.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	William Stephen, shipbuilder (24), and James Stephen (Youngest son of William Stephen), mariner (8). Other shareholder: John Fleming, merchant, Aberdeen (32).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	164 tons.
Length	75 feet, 11 inches (23.14m).
Breadth	22 feet, 6 inches (6.86m).
Depth	14 feet, 5 inches (4.39m).
Construction	Wood. Hull sheathed in copper.
Figurehead	Unicorn.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class A1.
Other information	1825: master – David Talbert, No. 12 Commerce Street, Aberdeen. 1826 / 1827: owned by John Fleming, merchant, Aberdeen.
Date Scrapped / Lost	January 1827: while on passage to Trieste, Italy, she was lost at sea with all hands, including 20-year old James Stephen (b.c1806) youngest son of William Stephen, shipbuilder . Wreck location off Ballankelly, Irish coast.

Enterprize (1823).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Scotland, Yarmouth, Liverpool, London, and at Dublin, Ireland.

Name(s)	Enterprize.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1823.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Robert Spring & Co., Aberdeen. Robert Spring, baker (16), William McGregor, shipmaster (4), and George Stunler, coal merchant (4). Other shareholders: John Clark, ropemaker (4), John Catto, meal merchant (4), Alexander Snell, stone merchant (4), Alexander Mortimer, baker (4), George Allan, shipmaster (8), David Copland (8), and James Barclay, corn merchant (8), all Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	83 tons.
Length	56 feet, 7 inches (17.25m).
Breadth	19 feet (5.79m).
Depth	10 feet, 7 inches (3.23m).
Construction	Wood. (Carvel built).
Figurehead	Fiddle.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1823 / 1833: owned by Robert Spring & Co., Aberdeen. 1825: master – George Brock, No. 25 James Street, Aberdeen.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Atlantic (1824).

She was built to carry general cargo; however, she is known to have carried passengers in steerage, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, London, Falmouth, Belfast (Northern Ireland), Quebec (Canada), and New York (USA).

Name(s)	Atlantic.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1824.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Catto & Co., Aberdeen. Robert Catto (20), William Catto (12), and John Catto Junior (4), all Aberdeen merchants. Other shareholders: George Thomson (4), John Catto (12), William Pirie (4), William Donald (4), and William Donald Junior (4), all Aberdeen merchants.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	216 tons.
Length	84 feet, 9 inches (25.83m).
Breadth	24 feet, 3 inches (7.39m).
Depth	16 feet (4.88m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Male bust.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1824 / 1833: master Alexander Lawson. 1827 / 1828: she carried 65 passengers / immigrants from Belfast to Quebec, 63 in steerage including 13 children. 19 th May 1834: she arrived at New York from Aberdeen with 72 immigrant passengers. Details of names can be found in 'The Surname Archive of England'. 1848 / 1849: owned by William Tully & Co., South Shields, England ⁶ .
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Sir R. Barclay (1824).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Leith, Liverpool, London, Kings Lynn, Dublin, Tenerife, the Straits of Gibraltar, and The Baltic.

Name(s)	Sir R. Barclay.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Hermaphrodite / Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	September 1824.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Alexander Mortimer, baker (16), John Reid, merchant (8), and John Nicol, shipmaster (8), all Aberdeen. Other shareholders: Robert Spring, baker (8), William Simpson, merchant (8), and James Barclay (8), all Aberdeen, and George Crawford, Montrose (8).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	111 tons.
Length	66 feet (20.12m).
Breadth	20 feet (6.10m).
Depth	11 feet, 1 inch (3.38m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Male bust.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1824 / 1827: master John Nicol, New Pier, Aberdeen. 1832 / 1833: owned by George Crawford, Montrose. 1839 / 1841: owned by Redhead, and registered in London. 1845 / 1846: owned by Stockdale, and registered at King's Lynn, and described as a coaster.
Date Scrapped / Lost	8 th June 1850: while on passage from Shields to Gibraltar with captain W. Jarvis and a crew of six, with a cargo of coal, she was stranded on the Margate Sands, Kent, England. Owner recorded as William C. Jarvis.

Bolivar (1825).

She was built as a general cargo carrier, but is also known to have carried passengers. She is known to have traded at Aberdeen, North Shields, Newcastle, Humber, Liverpool, London, Cowes (Isle of Wight), Genoa (Italy), Havana (Cuba), Montreal and Quebec (Canada), and America.

Name(s)	Bolivar.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	June 1825.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	John Fleming, ship-owner (16), William & Alexander Stephen, shipbuilders (8) , Robert Catto, merchant (4), William. Pirie, merchant (8), Alexander Mortimer, ship-owner (4), Robert Small, shipmaster (8), and others (16).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	224 tons.
Length	84 feet, 10 inches (25.86m).
Breadth	24 feet, 6 inches (7.47m).
Depth	16 feet, 6 inches (5.03m).
Construction	Wood. (Carvel built).
Figurehead	Male bust.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1825 / 1831: master Robert Small, No. 7 Wellington Street, Aberdeen. 1832 / 1839: owned by Johnston & Co. 1840 / 1848: owned by J. Ingo, and registered at Newcastle. 1844 / 1846: master Stephen , lengthened, new deck fitted and extensive repairs carried out, new tonnage 304 tons.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

She carried immigrants from Aberdeen to Canada, on at least two occasions:

Departed	Arrived	Master	Passengers
Aberdeen 11 April 1834.	Quebec 16 May 1834.	Ganson.	7 settlers.
Aberdeen 11 April 1835.	Montreal 3 June 1835.	Ganson.	Mr. Forsyth & Miss Morrison 28 settlers.

Earl of Fife (1825).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Liverpool, and Bremen (Germany).

Name(s)	Earl of Fife.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	May 1825.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Alexander Mortimer, shipmaster (16), Andrew Geddes, merchant (8), and Thomas Scott, shipmaster (4). Other shareholders: William Simpson, merchant (16), John Lindsay, miller at Bucksburn Mills, Aberdeen (4), James Barclay Junior, Templand, Forfar (8), and George Crawford, merchant, Montrose (8).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	113 tons.
Length	66 feet, 4 inches (20.22m).
Breadth	20 feet, ½ inch (6.11m).
Depth	11 feet, 6 inches (3.51m).
Construction	Wood. Carvel.
Figurehead	Male bust.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1825: master Thomas Scott (Co-owner), No. 14, Commerce Street, Aberdeen. 1827: owned by Alexander Mortimer, Waterloo Quay, Aberdeen.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Aid (1826).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Arbroath, Dundee, Newcastle, Hull, Liverpool, Plymouth, and Dublin (Ireland). She is also known to have traded at The Baltic, including Bremen (Germany).

Name(s)	Aid.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Schooner (Hermaphrodite), 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1826.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Mr. Chapel, Arbroath (64).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	121 tons.
Length	67 feet, 2 inches (20.47m).
Breadth	20 feet, 4 inches (6.20m).
Depth	12 feet, 7 inches (3.84m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1828: owned by Capt. & Co. 1830 / 1833: owned by J. Chapel. 1839 / 1841: owned by G. Greig, and registered in Arbroath. 1844: master and owner Duncan, and registered in Plymouth. 1845 / 1846: owned by Johnston.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Hermaphrodite rig - today this rig is referred to as a 'Main Topsail Schooner'.

James Hadden (1826).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo and was named after Lord Provost of Aberdeen, James Hadden (1758 to 1845) of Persley. She is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Leith, Dublin, and to Riga (Brazil).

He was Lord Provost of Aberdeen four times: 1801-1803 / 1809-1811 / 1813-1815 / 1830-1832.



*James Hadden of Persley.
(Painted by Henry William Pickersgill).*

Name(s)	James Hadden.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1826.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Alexander Mortimer, ship-owner (16), Robert Spring, ship-owner (8), and William Simpson, merchant (4). Other shareholders: William Moffat, shipmaster (8), James Barclay, farmer, Templand (8), John Lindsay, miller at Mill of Bucksburn, Aberdeen (8), Alexander Milligan, farmer, Mill of Knockleith, Aberdeenshire (4), and George Crawford, Montrose (8).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	156 tons.
Length	74 feet, 3 inches (22.63m).
Breadth	21 feet, 11 inches (6.68m).
Depth	13 feet, 3 inches (4.04m).
Construction	Wood. (Carvel built).
Figurehead	Male bust.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1827 / 1833: owned by Alexander Mortimer, Waterloo Quay, Aberdeen.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Matchless (1826).

She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Montrose, Liverpool, Poole, London, Recife, Pernambuco (Brazil), and Saint Dominica, West Indies (Caribbean).

Name(s)	Matchless.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1826.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	William Simpson, merchant (8), Alexander Mortimer, ship-owner (4), and John Nicol, shipmaster, No. 30 Wales Street (4), all Aberdeen. Other shareholders: William Reid, flesher (8), George Nicol, merchant (8), James Bate, vintner (4), all Aberdeen. James Barclay, farmer, Templand (8), James Morrison, farmer, Balhagarty (8), John Lindsay, miller at Mill of Bucksburn (8), and George Crawford, manufacturer, Forfar (8).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	188 tons.
Length	79 feet, 7 inches (24.26m).
Breadth	23 feet, 3 inches (7.09m).
Depth	15 feet, 5 inches (4.70m).
Construction	Wood. (Carvel built).
Figurehead	Female.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1827 / 1830: owned by Alexander Mortimer, Aberdeen. 1833: owned by George Nicol, merchant, Alexander Ross, shipmaster, and George Thomson (partner of Catto & Thomson, Rope and Sail Manufacturers, Links, Footdee). 1838: sold to Montrose (Owner probably Crawford). 1839 / 1840: owned by Crawford, and registered at Montrose.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Henry Michie (1827).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, London, Cork and Waterford (Ireland).

Name(s)	Henry Michie.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1827.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i> <i>*Helen Murray was Alexander Stephen's mother-in-law.</i>	Robert Leitch, shipmaster (24), Forbes Michie, ship carpenter (16), and Alexander Stephen, shipbuilder (4) , all Aberdeen. Other shareholders: Helen Murray*, widow of Andrew Murray, late tanner in Longhaven, near Cruden Bay (8), Isobel Connon, wife of John Connon, ship carpenter, lately of Aberdeen now of Banff (8), and Jean Allan, wife of George Allan, shipmaster (4), Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	82 tons.
Length	57 feet, 8 inches (17.58m).
Breadth	18 feet, 3 inches (5.56m).
Depth	10 feet, 9 inches (3.28m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Not fitted.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1827: master Robert Leitch, home address No. 51 Regent Quay, / No. 5 Yeats Lane, Aberdeen. (Formerly master of the 'Tyne'). 1833: owned by Leitch & others, and described as a Waterford coaster. 1841: master J. Linklater, owned by William Steel, coal-broker, ship-owner, and wood-merchant, Leggart Saw-mills, No. 30 Summer Street. 1847: master Murray, owned by G. Presley.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Young George (1827).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Bristol, and Yarmouth.

Name(s)	Young George.
Shipbuilder	William Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Sloop, 1 mast, & 1 deck, probably a square stern and a running bowsprit.
Launch Date	1827.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Captain J. Ritchie, Rosehearty, Aberdeenshire, and others (64).
Registered Port	Unknown.
GRT	64 tons.
Length	50 feet, 1 inch (15.27m).
Breadth	17 feet, 6 inches (5.33m).
Depth	9 feet, 4 inches (2.84m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1828: shipmaster Captain J. Ritchie, Rosehearty.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Vessels Built by Alexander Stephen & Sons.

Rosalinda (1828).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and she is known to have traded at Greenock, Falmouth, London, Belfast, Cork, and Limerick. She is also known to have traded further afield at Leghorn (Livorno), Tuscany (Italy), and Newfoundland (Canada).

Name(s)	Rosalinda.
Shipbuilder	Alexander Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1828.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Mr. Clarkson.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	129 tons.
Length	68 feet, 3 inches (20.80m).
Breadth	20 feet, 9 inches (6.32m).
Depth	12 feet, 6 inches (3.81m).
Construction	Wood.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	1830: owned by Dean & Co. 1840: owned by Smith & Co. 1844: owned by Carrey & Co. and registered in Belfast. 1847: owned by Herdman.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Sarah (1828).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and she is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Newcastle, and Yarmouth.

Name(s)	Sarah.
Shipbuilder	Alexander Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Smack, 1 mast, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1828.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	James Dick , merchant, Aberdeen. (64).
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	40 tons.
Length	43 feet, 7 inches (13.28m).
Breadth	14 feet, 10 inches (4.52m).
Depth	8 feet, 1 inch (2.46m).
Construction	Wood. Carvel.
Figurehead	Not fitted.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	<p>March 1829: owned by Rolph Wake, Newcastle Upon Tyne, England (64 shares).</p> <p>1830 / 1832: shipmaster - J. Caithness.</p> <p>1832: jointly owned by James Greig, baker, Stonehaven, and John Greig, baker, Leith (32/64 shares each).</p>
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Abbotsford (1829).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Liverpool. She is also known to have made passage to St. Petersburg (Russia), and New Orleans (USA).

Name(s)	Abbotsford.
Shipbuilder	Alexander Stephen & Sons, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	August 1829.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Robert Spring, baker / ship-owner (44), William Spark, watchmaker (8), and Thomas Nicolson, shipmaster (4). Other shareholders: John Paul, grocer (4), and John Williamson, flesher (butcher) (4), all Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	121 tons.
Length	65 feet, 4 inches (19.91m).
Breadth	20 feet, 9 inches (6.32m).
Depth	12 feet, 5 inches (3.78m).
Construction	Wood. Black birch, and fir.
Figurehead	Male bust.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class A1.
Other information	1830 / 1831: master Thomas Nicholson, No. 27, St. Clements Street, Footdee, Aberdeen. 1839 / 1841: shipmaster A. Baxter. 9 th September 1844: she collided with the ' Henrietta Glover ' at Ramsgate, England, but no damage was recorded.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Abbotsford Passenger List, 17th May 1836.

Passage: Liverpool, England to New Orleans, America.

DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI - PORT OF NEW ORLEANS.

"I, William Mitchell, Master or Commander of the Ship 'Abbotsford', do solemnly, sincerely and truly swear that the within list signed by me and now delivered to the collector of this District, contains the names of all the Passengers, taken on board the said Abbotsford, at the Port of Liverpool or at any time since, and that all matters herein set forth are, according to the best of my knowledge and belief just and true. I do further swear, that none of the said Passengers have died on the voyage. Sworn before me, this 17th day of May, 1836, (unreadable name, Collector of customs). William Mitchell, 17 May 1836 Ship Abbotsford, England. 6 males, 1 female".

List of all passengers taken on board the Ship 'Abbotsford' whereof W. Mitchell is Master, at the Port of Liverpool and bound for New Orleans.

	Name	Age	Sex	Occupation
1.	James Hughes.	24	Male	Labourer
2.	Thomas Hughes.	16	Male	Labourer
3.	James Connolly.	21	Male	Labourer
4.	Thomas Connolly.	18	Male	Labourer
5.	Larry O'Gaff.	15	Male	Labourer
6.	Catherine Nowlan.	15	Female	Lady
7.	Mary Connolly.	18	Female	Lady

The passengers all came from Ireland with the intention of becoming inhabitants of America. Adapted from www.immigrantships.net

An Apprenticeship in the Yard

We served oor time in 'e yard,
An' we got oorsel's a trade,
We learnt somethin' new ilke day,
An' we even got paid!

They sent us aff tae college,
Tae get an HNC,
It wis ca'd day-release
An' we hid fower years tae dee.

A journeyman he taught us,
A' 'e tricks o' 'e trade,
An' we wir expected tae harken,
Tae ivery word he said.

He may hae sent ye tae 'e stores,
Fer a 'sky hook' or even a lang stan',
An' a' 'e guys were laughin',
Fa'n ye returned wi empty han's.

The shipyard hid mony characters,
Fa liked tae tak the 'Mick',
An' they aye took ivery opportunity,
Tae play a joke or a trick.

Bit finally efter 'e first year,
We foun' oorsel's settled-in,
An' then it wis oor time tae laugh,
Fa'n the next year's recruits did begin.

Fower years did quickly pass,
An' that wis us 'time served',
Journeymen in oor ain right,
A title fit wis weel deserved.

Stanley Bruce.

Bibliography

- 1 Lloyds Register of Shipping (Various years).
- 2 Aberdeen Register of Shipping (Aberdeen City Archives).
- 3 Shipwreck Index of British Isles, Volume 2, Richard & Bridget Larn (1997).
- 4 A Shipbuilding History 1750 – 1932, Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd. (1932).
- 5 The Villages of Aberdeen – Footdee, by Diane Morgan (1993), ISBN 1898645019.
- 6 North of England Maritime Directory, Shipping Register, and Commercial Advertiser by Thomas Marwood Junior, (1848-49).
- 7 Shared Lives, Alexander Stephen, shipbuilder & James Templeton, carpet maker, by Maureen Borland (2006), ISBN 0-9552714-0-1.
- 8 Arbroath Harbour 1895-6, from the Arbroath Year Book, (1896).
- 9 Merchant Sailing Ships 1850 – 1875 by David R. MacGregor (1984), ISBN 0851773168.
- 10 Wooden Ship Building by Charles Desmond (1919).
- 11 The Port of Aberdeen: A History of Its Trade and Shipping from the 12th Century to the Present Day, by Victoria Elizabeth Clark (1921).
- 12 The Industries of Scotland, their Rise, Progress and Present Condition By David Bremner (1869).

Acknowledgements

James Floyd, Heraldry Society of Scotland for help with Alexander Stephen's coat of arms (1877).

Websites

- www.electricscotland.com The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen.
- www.aberdeenships.com Information on >3,000 Aberdeen built vessels.
- www.clydeships.co.uk Information on >35,000 vessels.

Further Reading

Stephen of Linthouse, A shipbuilding Memoir 1950 to 1983, by Alexander M. M. Stephen (2015). ISBN 978-0-9932048-0-7.

APPENDIX A

Aberdeen Ship-owners.

A couple of Aberdeen bakers who were also part-ship-owners. They part-owned the following vessels built by William Stephen & Sons, and Alexander Stephen & Sons.

Alexander Mortimer (Baker).

Address: No.52 Quay, home address No 53 Quay, Aberdeen.

Date	Name	Rig	Shares	L x B x D
1823	Enterprize	Schooner	4/64	56'7" x 19' x 10'7"
1824	Sir R. Barclay	Brigantine	16/64	66' x 20' x 11'1"
1825	Earl of Fife	Brig	16/64	66'4" x 20'1/2" x 11'6"
1825	Bolivar	Brig	4/64	84'10" x 24'6" x 16'6"
1826	James Hadden	Brig	16/64	74'3" x 21'11" x 13'3"
1826	Matchless	Brigantine	4/64	79'7" x 23'3" x 15'5"

Total = 60/64.

Robert Spring (Baker).

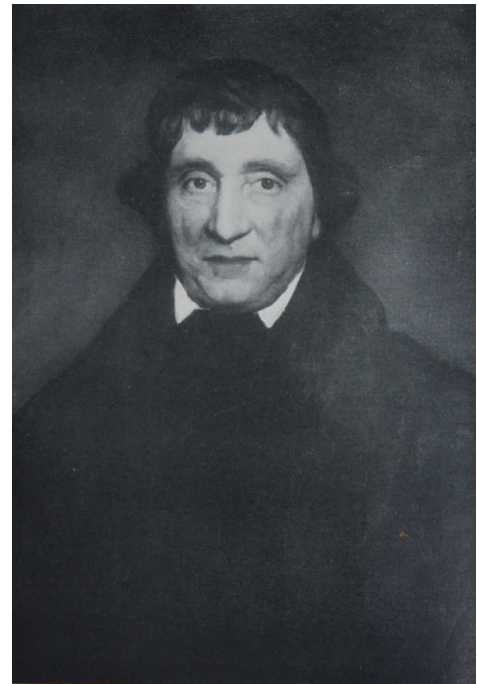
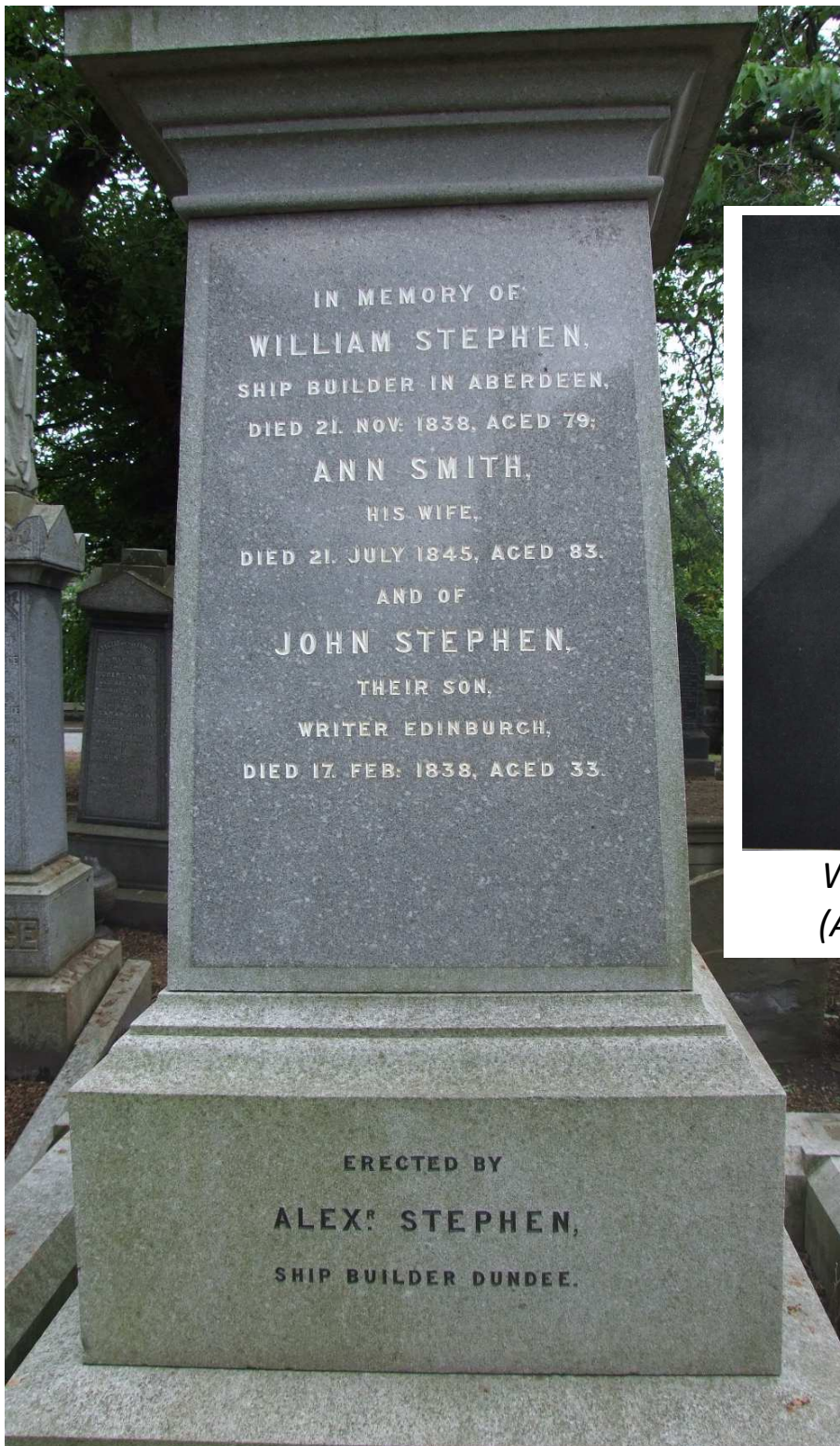
Address: No. 29 Schoolhill, home Springbank, Aberdeen.

Date	Name	Rig	Shares	L x B x D
1823	Enterprize	Schooner	16/64	56'7" x 19' x 10'7"
1824	Sir R. Barclay	Brigantine	8/64	66' x 20' x 11'1"
1826	James Hadden	Brig	8/64	74'3" x 21'11" x 13'3"
1829	Abbotsford	Brig	44/64	65'4" x 20'9" x 12'5"

Total 76/64.

APPENDIX B

Gravestone of Shipbuilder William Stephen (1759 to 1838).



*William Stephen.
(Artist unknown).*

Gravestone of shipbuilder William Stephen, St. Clements Kirkyard, Footdee, Aberdeen. This memorial must have been erected after 1842, as it was 1842 before Alexander Stephen moved to Dundee. (S. Bruce).

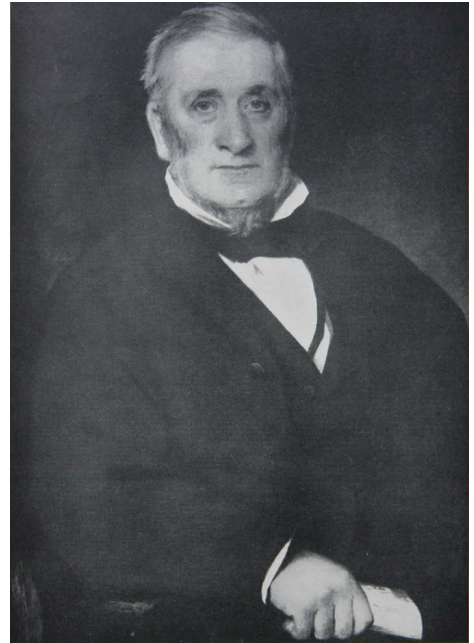
APPENDIX C.

Gravestone of Shipbuilder Alexander Stephen (1795 to 1875).



IN MEMORY OF
ALEXANDER STEPHEN,
SHIPBUILDER
IN ABERDEEN, ARBROATH,
DUNDEE, AND CLASGOW,
BORN AT ABERDEEN,
15TH MARCH 1795,
DIED AT BROUGHTY FERRY,
24TH APRIL 1875.

ALSO OF HIS WIFE
ELSPET MURRAY,
BORN AT LONCHAVEN,
3RD MARCH 1807,
DIED AT BROUGHTY FERRY,
4TH JUNE 1878.



*Alexander Stephen c1860.
(Artist unknown).*

*Gravestone of shipbuilder Alexander Stephen, St. Clements Kirkyard,
Footdee, Aberdeen. (S. Bruce).*

APPENDIX D

Indenture 'Twixt Alexander Stephen & William Stephen, 1807.

IT IS CONTRACTED, FINALLY ENDED AND AGREED UPON, BETWIXT ALEXANDER STEPHEN, SON OF WILLIAM STEPHEN, SHIP CARPENTER, IN FOOTDEE, WITH CONSENT OF HIS FATHER ON THE ONE PART, AND THE SAID WILLIAM STEPHEN ON THE OTHER PART, AS FOLLOWS, VIZ.: THE SAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN WITH CONSENT FORESAID HEREBY FEES AND CONDUCE HIMSELF AS AN APPRENTICE AND SERVANT TO THE SAID WILLIAM STEPHEN, HIS FATHER, FOR LEARNING THE BUSINESS OF A SHIP CARPENTER, AND THAT FOR THE SPACE OF SEVEN FULL AND COMPLETE YEARS FROM AND AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF NOVEMBER, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SEVEN, WHICH IS HEREBY DECLARED TO HAVE BEEN THE COMMENCEMENT OF HIS APPRENTICESHIP, NOTWITHSTANDING THE DATE HEREOF, DURING WHICH SPACE THE SAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN BINDS AND OBLIGES HIMSELF FAITHFULLY, HONESTLY, AND CONSTANTLY TO SERVE THE SAID WILLIAM STEPHEN, AND NOT TO ABSENT HIMSELF FROM HIS SAID SERVICE AT ANY TIME BY NIGHT OR BY DAY, WEEK DAY OR SABBATH DAY, WITHOUT LIBERTY ASKED AND GIVEN UNDER THE PENALTY OF PAYING HIS SAID MASTER THREE SHILLINGS STERLING OR SERVING HIM TWO DAYS AT THE EXPIRY HEREOF, FOR EACH DAY'S ABSENCE IN HIS MASTER'S OPTION: TO ABSTAIN FROM ALL GAMING, DRINKING, AND ALL IMMORAL AND DEBAUCHED COMPANY, DURING HIS APPRENTICESHIP: HIS MASTER'S LAWFUL SECRETS TO CONCEAL, PREVENT HIS LOSS, AND PROMOTE HIS INTEREST TO THE UTMOST OF HIS POWER. AND THE FORESAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN, THE APPRENTICE, HIS HONESTY, FIDELITY SURE REMAINING AT HIS SERVICE AND IMPLEMENTING AND PERFORMING THE WHOLE PREMISES ALEXANDER MARR, SHIP CARPENTER IN FOOTDEE, AND WILLIAM CLARK, IRON MONGER, IN ABERDEEN, BIND AND OBLIGE THEMSELVES CONJUNCTLY AND SEVERALLY AS CAUTIONEERS, SURETIES, AND FULL DEBTORS, FOR, AND WITH THE SAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN FOR THE WHICH CAUSES; AND ON THE OTHER PART, THE SAID WILLIAM STEPHEN BINDS AND OBLIGES HIMSELF TO TEACH AND INSTRUCT THE SAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN, THE APPRENTICE, IN THE BUSINESS OF A SHIP CARPENTER AND SHIP BUILDER AS PRACTISED BY HIM; AND FURTHER TO MAINTAIN AND UPHOLD THE SAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN AT BED AND BOARD DURING HIS APPRENTICESHIP; LASTLY, BOTH PARTIES BIND AND OBLIGE THEMSELVES TO IMPLEMENT AND PERFORM THE PROMISES TO EACH OTHER, UNDER THE PENALTY OF TWENTY POUNDS STERLING, TO BE PAID BY THE PARTY FAILING TO THE PARTY PERFORMING, OR WILLING TO PERFORM BY AND ALLOW PERFORMANCE, AND FOR THE MORE SECURITY, THEY CONSENT TO THE REGISTRATION HEREOF IN THE BOOKS OF COUNCIL AND SESSION, OR OTHERS

APPENDIX D (Continued)

COMPETENT, THEREIN TO REMAIN FOR PRESERVATION; AND, IF NEEDFUL THAT LETTERS OF WARNING ON SIX DAYS CHARGE AND ALL OTHER EXECUTION NEEDFUL MAY PASS AND BE DIRECT HEREON IN FORM AS APPEIRS. AND THERETO CONSTITUTE THEIR PROCURATORS, ETC. IN WITNESS WHEREOF THEY HAVE SUBSCRIBED THESE PRESENTS WROTE UPON PAPER DULY STAMPED BY JOHN DUTHIE, ADVOCATE IN ABERDEEN, AS FOLLOWS, viz., BY THE SAID ALEXANDER STEPHEN, WILLIAM STEPHEN AND ALEXANDER MARR, AT FOOTDEE, THE FOURTH DAY OF JULY, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND NINE YEARS, BEFORE WITNESSES JOHN MCKENZIE, VINTNER, IN FOOTDEE, AND THE SAID JOHN DUTHIE AND BY THE SAID WILLIAM CLARK, THE FIFTH DAY OF JULY AND YEAR AFORESAID ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND NINE BEFORE WITNESSES DAVID STEPHEN, APPRENTICE TO THE SAID WILLIAM CLARK AND THE SAID JOHN DUTHIE.

Signed. JOHN DUTHIE, WITNESS.

JOHN MCKENZIE, WITNESS.

DAVID STEPHEN, WITNESS.

JOHN DUTHIE, WITNESS.

Signed. ALEXR. STEPHEN.

WM. STEPHEN.

ALEXR. MARR.

WILLM. CLARKE.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT ALEX. STEPHEN WITHIN MENTIONED HATH SERVED OUT THE WITHIN MENTIONED TIME OF SEVEN YEARS IN A REGULAR AND ATTENTIVE MANNER — BOTH AS TO THEOREY AND PRACTICE FOR WHICH HE IS HEREBY DISCHARGED BY ME HIS FATHER THIS SECOND DAY OF JANRY. EIGHTEEN HUN. AND FIFTEEN.

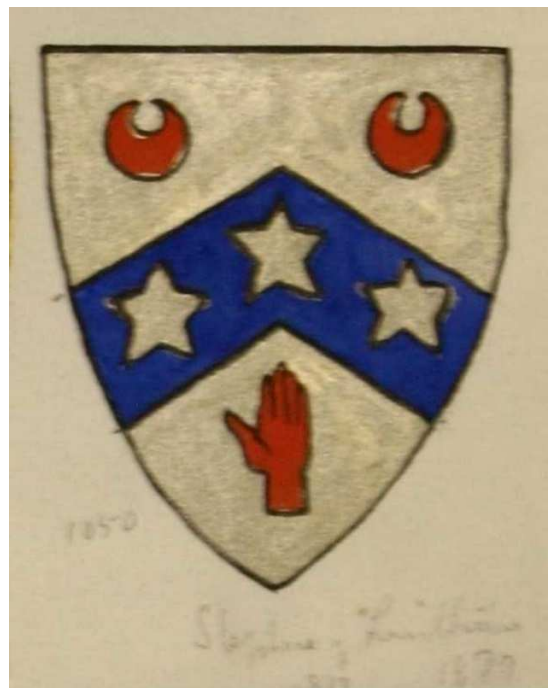
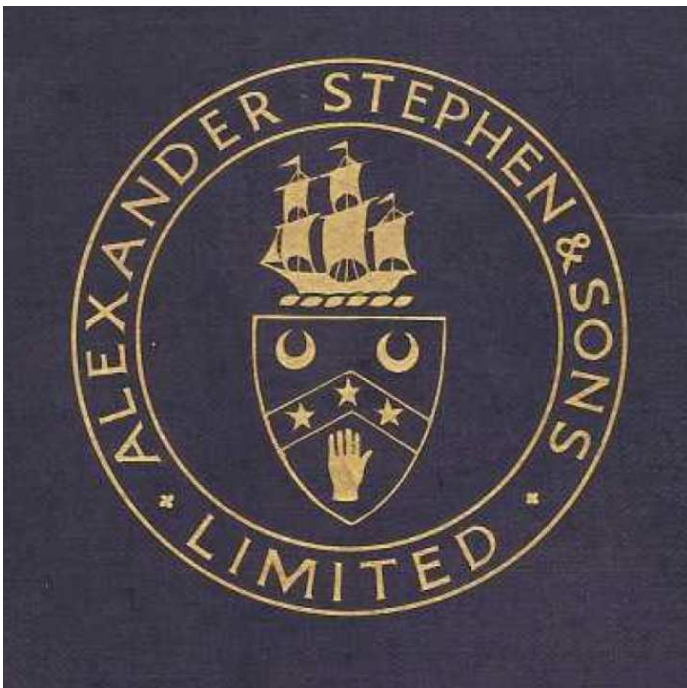
Signed. WM. STEPHEN.

There was no such apprenticeship agreement in the shipyards during my apprenticeship in Hall Russell Ltd., Aberdeen from 1980 to 1984. However, I did receive a letter signed by the Technical Director stating I had completed my 4-year apprenticeship.

APPENDIX E

Alexander Stephen – Heraldry.

The coat of Arms on the cover of this book I copied from 'A Shipbuilding History 1750 – 1932', Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd. (1932). I have a personal interest in heraldry as I'm currently a member of the Heraldry Society of Scotland. James Floyd also of the Heraldry Society of Scotland provided a copy of Alexander Stephen's personal coat of arms as shown below. You can see the company arms are virtually identical except for the palm showing the opposite hand, with the addition of a sailing ship over a rope as the crest.



Described in heraldic terms as follows:

Argent; on a chevron Azure between two crescents in chief and a dexter hand appaumé coupé in base Gules three mullets of the first.

STEPHEN OF LINTHOUSE, county Lanark (1877).

(Balfour Paul Ordinary for Stephen of Linthouse).

Argent – tincture with the colour silver.

Azure – tincture with the colour blue.

Chief – top.

Dexter - bearers right hand of the shield.

Appaumé coupé – open palm, cut off in a straight line.

Gules - tincture with the colour red.

Mullets – Stars.

Tincture – term used in heraldry to depict metals, colours, or furs.

APPENDIX F

Gravestone of David Stephen (c1791 to 1831), Ironmonger, Aberdeen.

David Stephen ironmonger, Aberdeen, son of William Stephen (1759 to 1838) shipbuilder died 18th April 1831 aged-40 years. He is buried in the St. Clements Kirkyard, Footdee, Aberdeen.

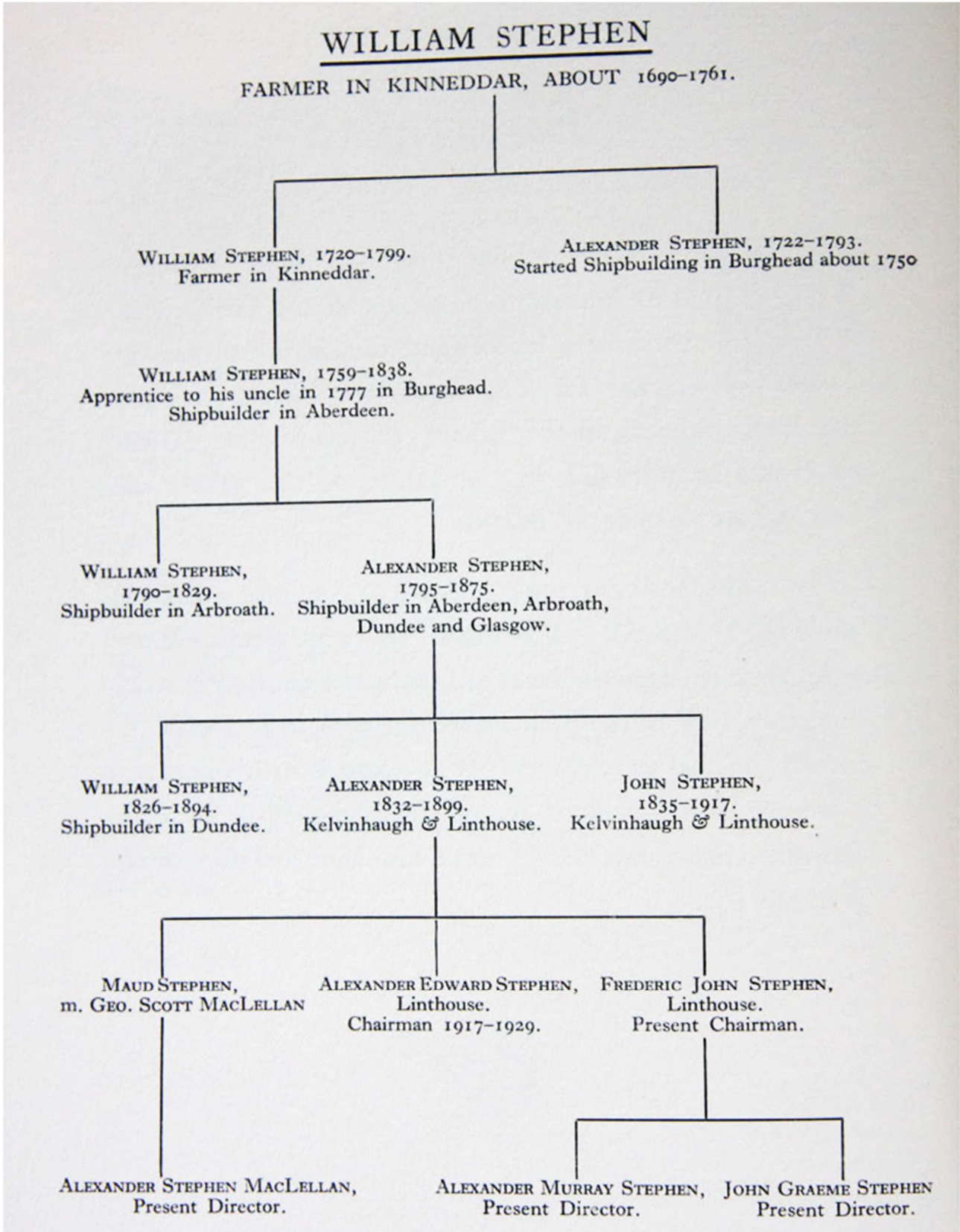


Gravestone of David Stephen, Ironmonger, Aberdeen, St. Clements Kirkyard, Footdee, Aberdeen. (S. Bruce).

APPENDIX G

Stephen Shipbuilders Family Tree

Tree copied from 'A Shipbuilding History 1750 – 1932, Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd. (1932)', showing shipbuilders of the family only. Kinneddar is in the Parish of Drainie, and located at the south end of the town of Lossiemouth, Moray.



APPENDIX H

Alexander Stephen and Elspeth Stephen (Nee Murray).

Elspet - Born 3rd March 1807 in Longhaven, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire.

They had six sons and twelve daughters, birth dates as follows:

Elspet Murray Stephen (Croudace), 21 Nov. 1824 in Aberdeen. (Died 1916).

William Stephen, 11 Jan. 1826 in Aberdeen. (Died 1894).

Anne Fleming Stephen (Paterson), 5 May 1827 in Arbroath. (Died 10 Nov. 1909 in Edinburgh).

James Stephen, 13 May 1828 in Aberdeen. (Died 1864 in Moffat).

Helen Stephen (Logan) 6 Apr. 1830 in Arbroath. (Died 1911).

Alexander Stephen, 21 May 1832 in Arbroath. (Died 1899).

Andrew Stephen, 11 Mar. 1833 in Arbroath. (Died 1887).

John Stephen, 19 Apr. 1835 in Arbroath. (Died 1917).

Mary Stephen (Templeton), 18 Apr. 1836 in Arbroath. (Died 1863).

Elizabeth Stephen 1838 in Arbroath (Died 1841 in Arbroath).

Mary Ann Stephen (Wright), 22 Apr. 1838 in Arbroath. (Died 1874).

Hannah Stephen (Adams), 14 Apr. 1839 in Arbroath. (Died 1911).

Janet Stephen, 28 Jun. 1840 in Arbroath. (Died 1912).

Marjory Fleming Stephen 21 Nov. 1841 in Arbroath. (Died 1863).

Ruth Stephen 13 Nov. 1842 in Arbroath. (Died 1843).

Samuel Stephen 1844*. (Died 1874).

Margaret Stephen (Mudie) 1847*. (Died 1910).

Williamina (Mina) Stephen (Stewart) 1848*. (Died 1928).

Note: married names in brackets.

** probably born in Dundee, but not confirmed.*

APPENDIX I

Stephen, Linthouse, Advert 1951.

THE SYREN
AND SHIPPING

JAN. 3, 1951
Page A 13

STEPHEN

LINTHOUSE



TSS Golfito
Passenger carrying
banana boat.
Built in 1949.
8.687 tons.
Length 448 feet.
Owners: Elders &
Fyffe.

HMT Empire Fowey
Troop ship.
Built in Germany in
1935.
19,121 tons.
Length 604 feet.
Refitted: 1950.



SHIPBUILDERS_____

_____ **ENGINEERS** _____

_____ **SHIP AND ENGINE REPAIRERS**

ALEXANDER STEPHEN AND SONS, LIMITED · LINTHOUSE · GLASGOW · S.W.1

Telephones : Shipyard - GOVAN 2421 (14 lines)
Repair - " 2425

Telegrams : Shipyard - LINTHOUSE, GLASGOW
Repair - MIDYARD, GLASGOW

Advert from The Syren & Shipping, 3rd January 1951

APPENDIX J

Possible Stephen's Build – 'Aurora' 1816.

William Stephen build eight brigs from 1793 to 1813, the names of these are unknown. The '**Aurora**' is possibly one of these brigs.

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo and served as a collier (Coal carrier) for many years. She is known to have traded at Aberdeen, Dundee, Leith, Newcastle, Sunderland, North Shields, Hull, and London. She also made passages to the Baltic including Riga (Latvia), Archangel (Russia), New York (USA) and Havana (Cuba) and Demerara (Guyana).

Name(s)	Aurora.
Shipbuilder	Possibly - William Stephen & Co., York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen.
Rig	Brig, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	April 1816.
Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	Catto & Co., Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen.
GRT	127 tons.
Length	66 feet, 6 inches (20.27m).
Breadth	21 feet, 6 inches (6.55m).
Depth	12 feet, 4 inches (3.76m).
Construction	Wood. Oak. (Her hull was sheathed in copper).
Figurehead	Not fitted.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class A1. 1831: Class down-graded to E1.
Other information	1816 / 1831: owned by Catto & Co., Aberdeen, and described as a coaster. 1818: Snow rigged. (LRS). 1832 / 1833: owned by Tynemouth. 1838 / 1843: owned by J. Bell; and described as a North Shields Coaster.

Continued...

APPENDIX J (Continued).

Aurora (1816). (Continued)

<p>Other information (Continued).</p>	<p>1844 / 1848: owned by J. Reid; and described as an Aberdeen collier / coaster. 1855, 10th March: on passage from Sunderland to Aberdeen with a cargo of coal she ran aground 5-miles east of Dunbar, all hands were saved. 1862: master – Stephen. 1864: owned by Robert Johnston, merchant, Aberdeen.</p>
<p>Date Scrapped / Lost</p>	<p>December 1862: The Dundee Courier, 10th January 1863 reported: <i>“Sorry to report Aberdeen coasting vessel ‘Aurora’ (127 tons), Davidson master, which sailed from Aberdeen 17th December for Sunderland in ballast to take in coals for Southampton, was at sea during recent gales and has not yet been heard of.”</i></p>

Other possible Aberdeen shipbuilders who may have built the ‘Aurora’ in 1816.

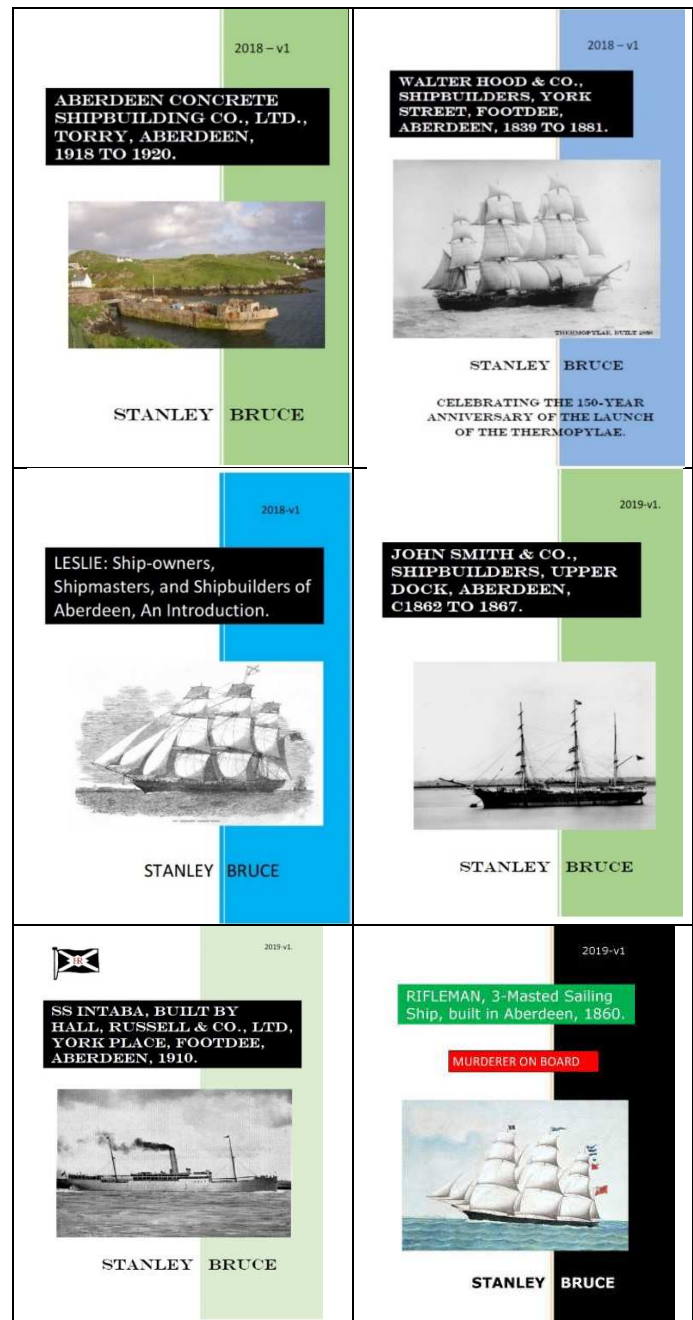
Shipbuilder.	Address.	Approx. Dates in Business.
J & T Adamson.	York Street, Footdee.	c1811 to c1829.
James Anderson.	York Street, Footdee.	c1815.
William Duthie & Co.	York Place, Footdee.	1815 to 1838.
Alexander Hall & Co.	York Street, Footdee.	1811 to 1957.
Nicol, Reid & Co.	York Street, Footdee.	c1815 to c1834.

Further Books in this Series.

Further books in this series are planned, and will all be available to read online or download as a pdf, free of charge at www.electricscotland.com on 'The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen' page.

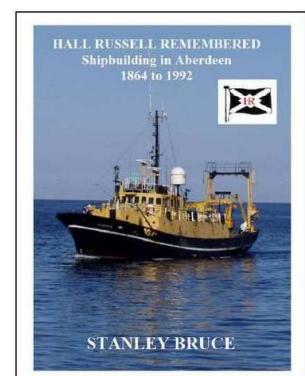
Available online to date:

- Aberdeen Concrete Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., Torry, Aberdeen, 1918 to 1920 (2018), 31-pages, no ISBN.
- Walter Hood & Co., Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1839 to 1881 (2018), 220-pages, no ISBN.
- LESLIE: Ship-owners, Shipmasters, & Shipbuilders of Aberdeen (An Introduction) (2018), 150-pages, no ISBN.
- John Smith & Co., Shipbuilders, Upper Dock, Aberdeen, c1862 to 1867 (2019), 47-pages, no ISBN.
- SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910 (2019), 70 -pages, no ISBN.
- RIFLEMAN, 3-Masted Sailing Ship, built in Aberdeen, 1860, 37 pages, no ISBN.



Other Shipbuilding Books by this Author.

- Hall Russell Remembered, Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992, (2007), 36-pages, No ISBN. (Available to download as a pdf, free on www.electricscotland.com).
- Hall Russell Remembered, Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992, rewritten and republished (2009), 56-pages, ISBN 9781907234026. (Out of print).



Other Books by this Author.

Banff Roll of Honour - WW1 and WW2, (2014). No ISBN, *kindle version only*.

Banff Through the Years, Volume 1.: An Illustrated History of the Royal Burgh - Volume 1 – Up to 1699, (2013). ISBN 978-1-907234-12-5. *Also available for the kindle*.

Along The Coast – St Fergus to the Bridge of Don, (2013). ISBN 978-1-907234-10-1.

Herring Fishing - Banff and Macduff, by Stanley Bruce and Malcolm Smith, (2011).

ISBN 978-1-907234-06-4.

Along the Coast – Burghead to Portknockie, (2010). ISBN 978-1-907234-09-5.

Also available for the kindle.

Along The Coast - Cullen to Pennan, 2nd Edition, (2010). ISBN 978-1-907234-08-8.

Also available for the kindle.

Whitehills Through the Years, (2010). ISBN 978-1-907234-04-0.

Fraserburgh Through the Years, (2010). ISBN 978-1-907234-07-1.

Back to the Sea – An Introduction to Peter Frederick Anson and his life on the east coast of Scotland, by Stanley Bruce and Tina Harris (2009). ISBN 978-1-907234-00-2.

Also available for the kindle.

Along the Coast – Pennan to St Fergus, (2009). ISBN 0-9547960-9-9.

Also available for the kindle.

Macduff Through the Years, (2008). ISBN 978-0-9547960-8-2.

Macduff Roll of Honour 1914-1919, (2008). ISBN 978-09547960-7-5.

Along The Coast - Cullen to Pennan, (2007). ISBN 0-9547960-4-4.

Comforting Words, (2006). ISBN 0-9547960-3-9.

Along The Coast - Cullen to Pennan, (2007). ISBN 978-9547960-4-4.

Macduff Parish Church Bi-centenary, (2005). (Revised and reprinted 2007).

The Bard o' Buchan Vol. 1, (2005). ISBN 0-954796020.

The Bard o' the Broch: A Celebration of Fraserburgh's Heritage, (2004).

ISBN 0-954796013.

The Bard of Banff, (2004). ISBN 0-954796006.

Other Books which include Work by this Author.

I Love Banffshire, by Clare Macpherson-Grant Russell, (2009). ISBN 9780851014364.

Red Snow, by Michael Slade, (2009). ISBN 9780143167792.

The Book of Banff, by the Banff Preservation & Heritage Society, (2008).

ISBN 978-1-841147-90-1.

Other Books Edited by this Author:

Coming Home – Poetry Anthology (2009). ISBN 978 -1-907234-01-9.

The Herring Lassies – Following the Herring, by Rosemary Sanderson, (2008).

ISBN 978-0-9547960-6-8. [Also available for the kindle.](#)

Coasting – Poetry Anthology (2007). ISBN 978-0-9547960-5-1.

And, if you like my poetry, and would like to see more, have a look online at

www.poetrypoem.com BardofBanff.

And you'll find some of my shipbuilding poems on 'The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen' web

page on www.electricscotland.com

THANKS FOR READING

~~~~~ THE END ~~~~~