

2025- v1

**HALL, RUSSELL & CO.
SHIPBUILDERS,
FOOTDEE, ABERDEEN.**

THE 1860'S

A NEW BEGINNING



STANLEY BRUCE

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Cover Photograph: The barque '**Inverness**' built by **Hall, Russell & Co.** in 1869.

This book has been published on an entirely non-profit basis and made available to all online free of charge as a pdf. The aim of the book is to make the history of vessels built by **Hall, Russell & Co.** available to a wider audience. There is much available on the internet, 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.

**HALL, RUSSELL & CO.,
SHIPBUILDERS,
FOOTDEE,
ABERDEEN.**

**THE 1860'S
A NEW BEGINNING**

BY

STANLEY BRUCE

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2025.

1st digital edition.

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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.

Please treat all dimensions as approximate.

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Introduction.

Hall, Russell & Co. was established in September 1864 in the former premises of the Aberdeen Iron Works, York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen. (From 1860 it was the premises of Thomson, Catto, Buchanan, Engineers and Boilermakers).

From 1854 to 1860 the **Aberdeen Iron Works** was owned by **Thomson, Catto, Hall & Co.** the **Hall** being **James and William Hall**, so, they knew the business and premises well.



It is believed that the company of **Hall, Russell & Co.** was formed as “a new beginning” because **Alexander Hall & Co.**, which was owned by brothers **James and William Hall**, sons of the founder **Alexander Hall**, was in financial trouble with the possibility of going bankrupt. The **Hall brothers** are said to have had some recent losses on vessels they had built, but they had a bigger problem, they part-owned the ropery business of Catto, Thomson & Co. at the Links, operated by George Thomson, and he had absconded with huge debts of which the **Hall brothers** as co-owners were left liable for.

Lucky for the **Hall brothers** the 1860's was an opportune period to own an iron works. Due to the change from sail to steam, engines and boilers were in big demand. Even more so after 1869 when the Suez Canal opened.

Initially, **Hall, Russell & Co.** built steam engines and boilers, but only one year after the company's establishment they commenced building iron vessels in co-operation with **Alexander Hall & Co.** **James** and **William Hall** now being co-owners in both **Alexander Hall & Co.** and **Hall, Russell & Co.** meant the two firms you could say were like sister companies.

The change from building wooden vessels to iron ones was a big step, requiring different machinery and considerable retraining of workers. The iron works, of course, which had for many years manufactured boilers had machinery for cutting iron, punching rivet holes and had workers with experience in working with iron including riveting. One of the company founders, **Thomas Russell** had experience in building steam engines in Glasgow.

The first vessel on the builders list for **Hall, Russell & Co.** is the iron 3-masted barque '**Luke Bruce**' (320 tons) yard number 166, launched 26th November 1868. Preceding yard numbers are thought to have been allocated to individual steam engines and boilers. However, according to local press articles **Hall, Russell & Co.** built four iron-hulled vessels (or at least their iron hulls and engines and boilers; **Alexander Hall & Co.** may have done the rest of the fitting out, we don't know) vessels that are on the **Alexander Hall & Co.** yard list. These vessels were the steamer '**Douglas**' (874 tons) yard number 244, launched 29th November 1865; the steamer '**Taiwan**' (338 tons) yard number 249, launched in 1868; the steamer '**Kwang Tung**' (492 tons) yard number 256, launched in 1868; and the steam yacht or tug '**Fire Fly**' (unknown tons) yard number 262, launched in 1868.

The **Aberdeen Iron Works** premises in York Place had no slipway at the harbour side, it is believed that the vessels were initially built and launched on one of the slipways owned by **Alexander Hall & Co.** At this period **Alexander Hall & Co.** had two yards, which were referred to as the upper and lower yards.

James Hall died 29th May 1869. **Alexander Hall & Co.** was declared insolvent in December 1869, and **William Hall** subsequently sold his shares of **Hall, Russell & Co.** to **John Cardno Couper**. However, in 1870, **William Hall** somehow managed to restart **Alexander Hall & Co.**

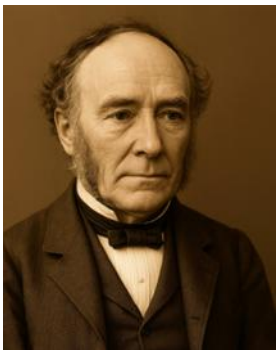
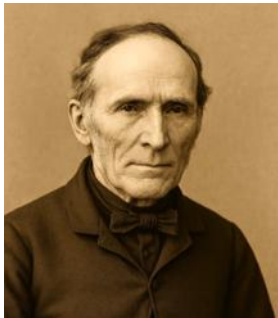
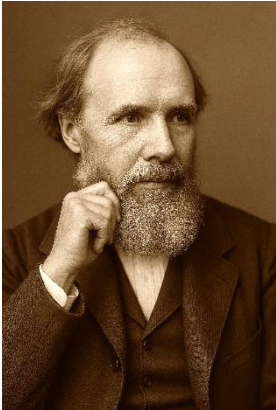

In 1957, **Hall Russell & Co., Ltd.** and **Alexander Hall & Co., Ltd.**, both by this time owned by the **Burntisland Shipbuilding Co.** merged, and the **Alexander Hall & Co.** name was gradually dropped.

Hall, Russell & Co. continued in business until 1989 (125-years) when they went into receivership during the build of the passenger/cargo vessel RMS '**St Helena**', yard number 1,000. **A&P Appledore (Aberdeen) Ltd.** took over the yard early in 1990, but only two years later they closed the yard down. All that remains today is the former **Aberdeen Iron Works** building, and the drydock which was built between 1972 and 1974, which is currently operated as part of the ship-repair business of **Dales Marine Services Ltd.**

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

Former shipbuilder, Hall, Russell Ltd./A&P Appledore (Aberdeen) Ltd., 1980 to 1991.

Company Founders

| | |
|---|--|
|  <p>William Hall</p> | <p>William Hall born 1806. Son of Alexander Hall (1760 to 1849).</p> <p>He was draughtsman / designer at Alexander Hall & Co.</p> <p>Died 9th August 1887, and is buried in St Clements Kirkyard, Footdee, Aberdeen.</p> |
|  <p>James Hall</p> | <p>James Hall born c1804. Son of Alexander Hall (1760 to 1849). He was the yard manager at Alexander Hall & Co. He died of a heart attack 29th May 1869 (see timeline for more information). Buried at the Parish Church graveyard in Macduff with his wife Christina Wilson (c1808 to 1866) who hailed from Macduff</p> |
|  <p>Thomas Russell.</p> | <p>Thomas Russell born c1821, Stirlingshire. He was an engineer from Glasgow who had experience of steam engine manufacture. He worked as a manager at J. & G. Thompson, shipbuilders, Glasgow. 1864: He was appointed managing partner at Hall, Russell & Co. He was chairman and principal shareholder of the Davidson Steamship Co., Aberdeen. He retired in June 1881, due to ill health, and relocated to the Bridge of Allan, near Stirling. 24th July 1886, he died aged 65-years at Albyn Lodge, Bridge of Allan, Stirling.</p> |
|  <p>John Cardno Couper.</p> | <p>John Cardno Couper born c1821. He served his apprenticeship as shipwright at Alexander Hall & Co. and later went to sea as a ship carpenter. He and his father established a shipbuilding and ship-repair business at Hong Kong. His father was kidnapped by pirates and was never seen again. John Couper returned to Aberdeen in 1863 and bought the Craigiebuckler Estate on the outskirts of Aberdeen. He retired in June 1881. He was also a director of the Aberdeen Tramways Co., and the Adam Steamship Co. Died 9th January 1902, leaving £91,861 (Approx £9.82 million in 2025). He is buried in the Allenvale Cemetery, Aberdeen.</p> |

Photographs enhanced using AI.

Aberdeen Shipbuilders in the 1860's.

There was a lot of competition for shipbuilding work in Aberdeen at this period, and by 1870 for a variety of reasons seven of the following Aberdeen shipbuilding companies were out of business. **Alexander Hall & Co.** technically, suffered the same fate, as in December 1869 they were in sequestration. June 1870, led to an auction of the shipyard equipment, however **William Hall** managed to recommence business by September 1870 (After selling his shares of **Hall, Russell & Co.** to **John Cardno Couper**) trading under the same name.

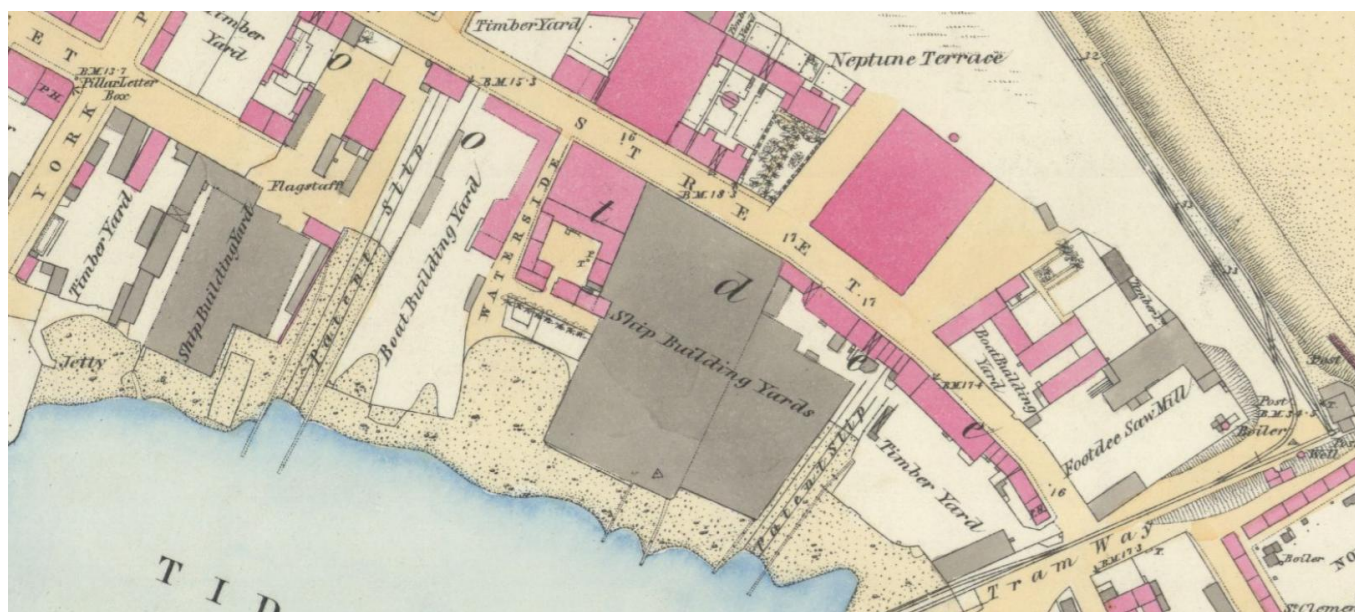
During the 1860's most of the Aberdeen shipbuilders were still building wooden or composite vessels, however **Leckie, Wood & Munro** established in Torry in 1864 launched their first iron vessels in 1866, **Hall, Russell & Co.** from 1865. It was 1869 Before **Alexander Hall & Co.** built their first iron vessel the 3-masted sailing ship '**May Queen**' (733 tons).

| Shipbuilder | Dates in Business | First Iron Vessel Built |
|---|-------------------|---|
| Footdee. | | |
| Alexander Hall & Co. | 1809 to 1957. | 1869: ' May Queen '. |
| Hall Russell & Co. | 1864 to 1990. | 1865: ' Douglas '. |
| Alexander Duthie & Co. | 1838 to 1861. | None. |
| John Duthie, Sons & Co. | 1861 to 1907. | 1872: ' Lochnagar '. |
| Walter Hood & Co. | 1838 to 1881. | 1868: ' Glenavon '. |
| Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co. | 1860 to 1864. | 1863: Rebuilt the ' Prince Consort '. |
| Inches, Upper Dock | | |
| Andrew Brands | c1856 to 1864. | None. |
| John Smith & Co. | c1862 to 1867. | None. |
| David Burns & Co. | c1857 to c1866. | None. |
| John Humphrey & Co. | 1865 to 1875. | None. |
| William Duthie jnr. | 1856 to 1870. | None. |
| William Beedie. | c1865. | None. |
| Torry | | |
| Leckie, Wood & Munro. | 1864 to 1870. | 1866: Built hopper barges for Aberdeen Harbour. |

Aberdeen Boatbuilders in the 1860's.

At this period several other small wooden boat-builders operated around the harbour area, four that I'm aware of were:

- **Alex. L. Forsyth**, Bon Accord Saw Mill, York Street, Footdee (c1869 to c1891).
- **William Neilsen & Co.**, York Street, Footdee (c1827 to c1866).
- **John Skinner & Son**, Wellington Street (Formerly York Street) (1834 to 1917).
- **George Smith**, New Pier (c1869 to c1870).



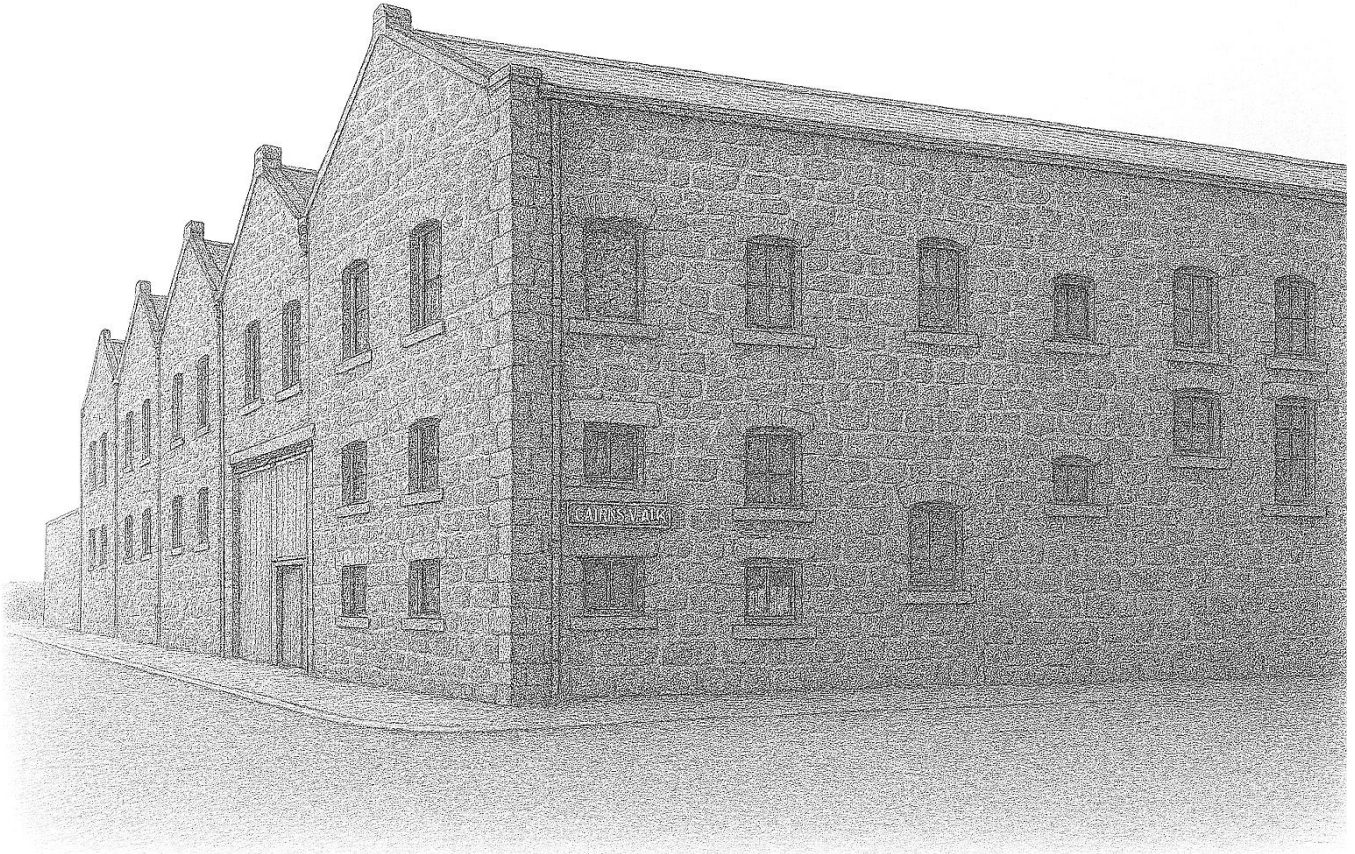
1865/1867 map showing two boatbuilding yards in York Street.

The early 1860's Aberdeen Post Office Directories have entries for **Thomson, Catto, Buchanan, & Co.**, engineers, boiler makers, chain makers, anchor makers, brass-founders, and iron shipbuilders, York Place Iron Works. I suspect the reference to iron shipbuilders reflects the business of the former owner **William Simpson & Co.** who built three iron ships in the 1840's, as I could not find any vessels built by this company, although they did reconstruct and modify the steamer '**Prince Consort**' (640 tons) in 1863.

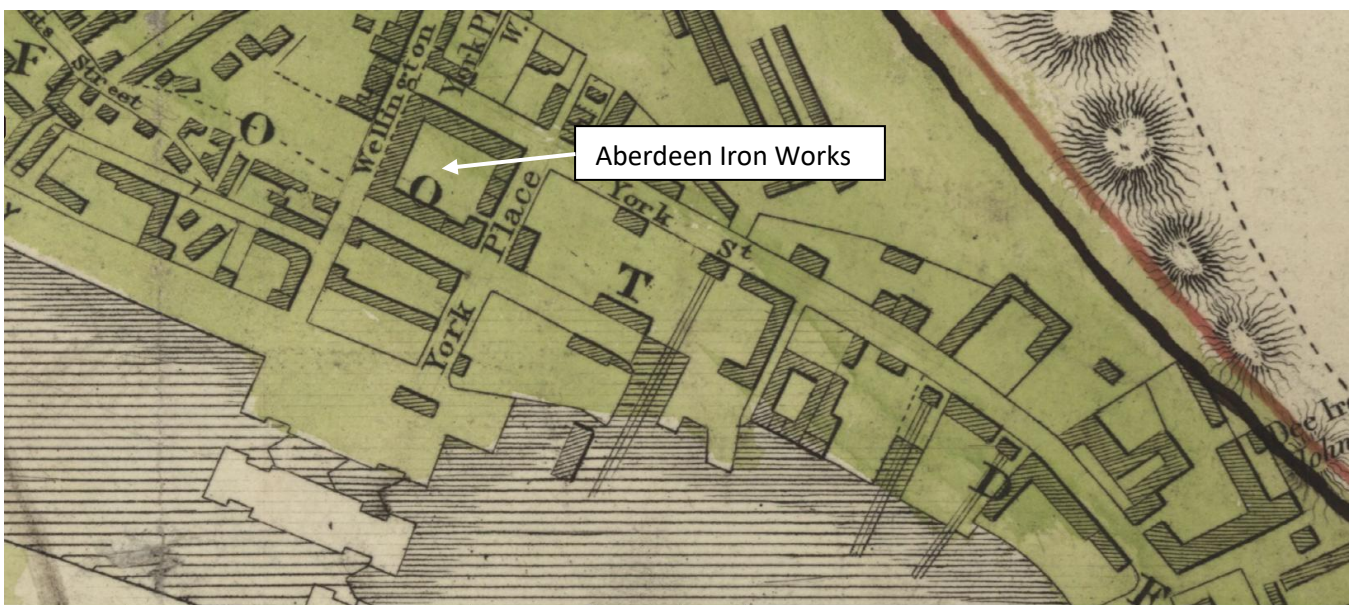
| Vessels built by William Simpson & Co., Aberdeen Iron Works, Footdee. | | | | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|--------|--|-----------------------------|
| Date | Name | Rig | GRT | Owners | L x B x D |
| 1844 | The Queen. | Iron Steamer. | 614 | Aberdeen, Leith, & Clyde Shipping Company. | 194' x 47' x 16' |
| 1845 | Prince of Wales. | Iron Schooner. | 240 | Old Leith and London Shipping Company. | 112, x 22'7"x 12'6" |
| 1846 | Dee. | Iron Schooner. | 97 nrt | Aberdeen, Leith, and Clyde Shipping Company. | 62.7' x 19.3' x 10.4' |

Timeline.

c1824: The **Aberdeen Iron Works**, York Place, Footdee, was owned by **William Simpson & Co.**, Iron Founders. The building is still standing today and is Category C(S) listed by Historic Scotland.



Former Aberdeen Iron Works building, SW corner. (S. Bruce).



1847 map by Alexander Ogg and John Smith, showing the Aberdeen Iron Works, York Place, Footdee.

1854, 2nd October: The Rope and Sailmaking company of **Thomson, Catto & Co.**, Footdee, Aberdeen was owned by partners George Thomson, John Catto, and shipbuilders **James Hall, William Hall, and John Duthie Jr.** At this period the Aberdeen shipbuilders were still mostly engaged in building sailing vessels.

THE Business of ROPE and SAIL MAKING,
 carried on for the last Fifty years, under the Firm of **CATTO, THOMSON, & Co.**, is continued by **GEORGE THOMSON, JOHN CATTO, JAMES HALL, WILLIAM HALL, and JOHN DUTHIE, Jun.**, under the same Firm; and they solicit a continuance of the favours so long conferred on their Predecessors.
 Footdee, Aberdeen, Oct. 2, 1854.

Notice published in the Aberdeen Herald, 7th October 1854.

1854, 2nd October: The Aberdeen Iron Works formerly owned by **William Simpson & Co.** was owned by **Thomson, Catto, Hall & Co.** Partners were George Thomson, John Catto, and shipbuilders **James Hall and William Hall.**

THE Business of ENGINEERING, BOILER MAKING, IRON and BRASS FOUNDRY, CHAIN and ANCHOR and GENERAL BLACKSMITH WORK, carried on under the Firm of **WILLIAM SIMPSON & Co.**, is continued by **George Thomson, John Catto, James Hall, and William Hall,** under the Firm of **THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, & CO.**; and the new Firm solicits a continuance of those favours for so many years conferred on their Predecessors.
 York Place Iron-Works,
 Aberdeen, October 2, 1854.

Notice published in the Aberdeen Herald, 7th October 1854.

TO BLACKSMITHS.
WANTED, a few good Steady Workmen, to whom regular employment will be given. Apply to
THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, & CO.
 York Place Iron Works, Aberdeen,
 231 March, 1855

Advertisement in the Aberdeen Herald 24th March 1855.

1856, 9th May: A fire occurred at the works of **Thomson, Hall, Catto, & Co.**, York Place.

1856, 10th May: The following notice was published in the Aberdeen Herald:

Fire at York Place Works.

MESSRS. **THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, & CO.**
 desire to return their sincere thanks to the very many
 Friends who so promptly came to their assistance this morning,
 and in an especial manner to the Officers and Men from the Bar-
 racks for th ir prompt attendance and assistance rendered in
 every manner that was required.
THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, & CO.
 Footdee, 9th May, 1856.

1860, 30th June: The Aberdeen Iron Works was owned by Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co. The name Hall was dropped. It looks like the Hall's sold out to Buchanan.

N O T I C E.

THE SUBSCRIBERS, the present Partners of the
 Firm of **THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, & Co.**, Engineers and
 Founders, York Place Ironworks, Aberdeen, beg leave to inti-
 mate that they have assumed into Partnership with them in said
 Business Mr. **GEORGE BUCHANAN**, Engineer, of the Firm
 of Messrs. George **Buchanan** & Company, Bucklersbury, London.
 The Business will in future be carried on under the Firm of
THOMSON, CATTO, BUCHANAN, & COMPANY, Engi-
 neers in Aberdeen.

All Claims on the present Firm of **THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, &**
COMPANY will be liquidated by the Subscribers; and it is re-
 quested that such Claims may be sent in to them at their Office,
 No. 21, YORK STREET, Aberdeen, for Settlement.

The Subscribers will also Receive and Discharge all Debts due
 to the present Firm.

THOMSON, HALL, CATTO, & CO.
GEO. THOMSON
JOHN CATTO

Aberdeen, 30th June, 1860.

Notice published in the Aberdeen Herald, 30th June 1860.

1860, 4th July: The following advertisement was published in The Scotsman:

TO IRON MOULDERS.

WANTED, a Few Good **GREENSAND**
MOULDERS of Steady Habits. Apply to **Thomson,**
Catto, Buchanan, & Coy., York Place Ironworks, Aberdeen.

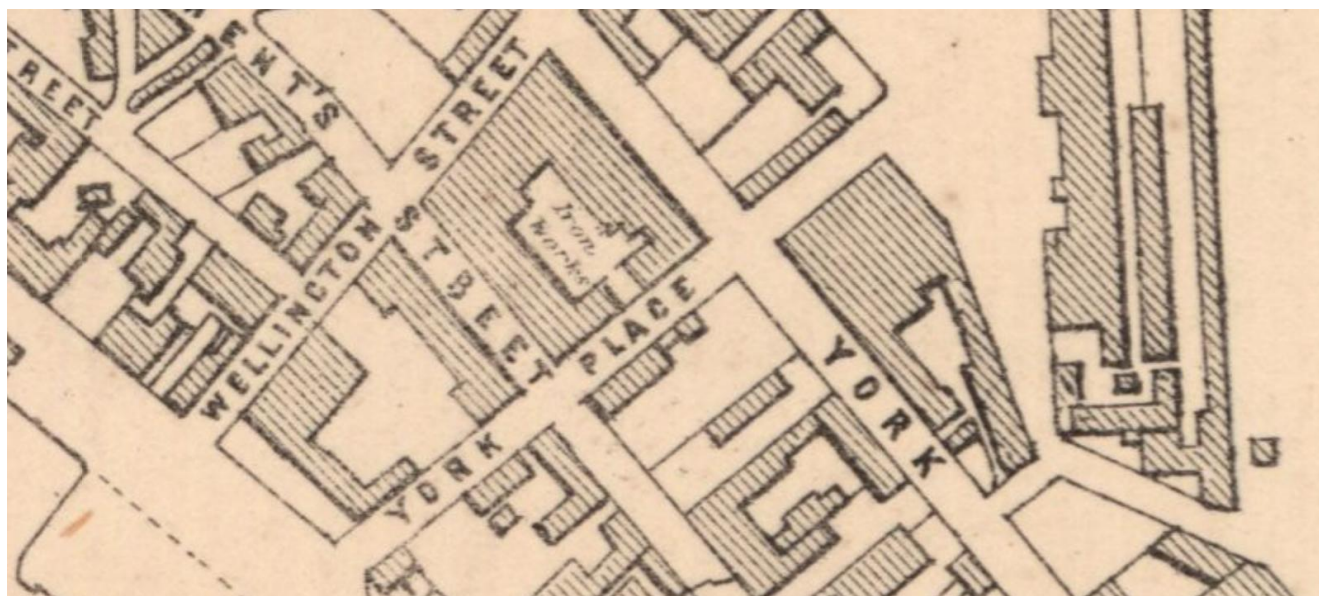
My understanding is that greensand moulding was used to cast bronze items that required a high surface finish. At this period, bronze was used in the manufacture of components for steam engines, typically because of its ability to withstand high temperatures and high pressures. Properties of high strength, low friction coefficient, and resistance to corrosion made it particularly suitable. Bronze was also used to cast valve parts.

1862, 17th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on donations to the Distress in Lancashire fund and amongst the donations were:

| | <i>Approx. £ in 2025</i> | |
|---|--------------------------|------|
| Workmen employed at Messrs Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co.: | £7 10s. | £818 |
| Workmen employed at Walter Hood & Co., shipbuilders: | £2 12s 5d. | £273 |
| Workmen employed at Walter Hood & Co., blacksmiths: | 1s 11d. | £164 |
| Walter Hood, shipbuilder: | £5 | £545 |
| Workmen employed at John Smith, shipbuilders: | 17s 6d. | £95 |
| Workmen employed by Blaikie Brothers: | 1 19s 3d | £215 |
| Workmen at William Duthie, Shipbuilders: | 4s 6½d | £25 |

1863, 14th January: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on subscriptions for the 'Distress in Lancashire' fund:

| | <i>Approx £ in 2025</i> | |
|--|-------------------------|------|
| Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co.: | 9s 10d. | £52. |
| William Duthie Jr., shipbuilder.: | 5s, 9d. | £30 |
| Blaikie Brothers, Engine Shop: | 6s 9d. | £35. |



Map showing the Aberdeen Iron Works. (Keith and Gibb 1862).

1863, 1st April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on donations to the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary over the past year and amongst the donations were:

| | <i>Approx £ in 2025</i> | |
|---|-------------------------|--------|
| The workers employed at Messrs Hall & Co., Shipbuilders: | £10. | £1,090 |
| Messrs Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co., York Place: | £7 10s | £820 |
| The workers employed by Messrs Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co.: | £7 10s. | £820 |

1863, 30th July: The Dundee Advertiser reported as follows: *"MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT. – On Tuesday afternoon, as James Adams, a labourer, residing in Water Lane, was employed mending a machine belt of the boiler shed in **Thomson, Catto Buchanan, & Co.**'s works, he got entangled with the machinery, and was burled thrice round the shaft before he could be rescued. While being turned round in this fearful manner, the foot of the unfortunate man struck the head of John Grant, a blacksmith, who was working at the time at a sheave, and the latter fell a distance of some twelve feet. Both men were most severely injured, and on being removed to the Infirmary, the left arm of Adams was amputated at the shoulder. We believe Adams' injuries are such as to preclude the hope of recovery."*

1863, 18th September: The Peterhead Sentinel and General Advertiser for Buchan District reported as follows: *"THE '**PRINCE CONSORT**' STEAMER. – This beautiful and favourite iron steamer, which our readers will remember was wrecked on the Aberdeen pier, about six months ago, in taking the harbour while a heavy sea was running, and which was purchased some time after by **Messrs Thomson, Catto, Buchanan, & Co.**, was, after being reconstructed by this firm, launched on Saturday last. The dimensions of the steamer now are – length 223 feet, breadth 35 feet, depth 14 feet, gross tonnage about 640 tons, and 300 H.P. She has been much improved, and has had feathering floats introduced, which will increase her former well-known speed. The steamer will, in a short time, be ready for sea."*

Further to above the Aberdeen People's Journal, 19th September 1863 reported that the feathered paddles are expected to increase her speed by approx. 1½ knots. **Messrs Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co.** intend to sell her.

The above article is interesting as it shows the workforce were involved in shipbuilding work immediately prior to the establishment of **Hall, Russell & Co.**



Model of the paddle steamer '**Prince Consort**'. www.scottishshipwrecks.com

1863, 14th November: The Aberdeen People's Journal reported as follows: *"THE 'PRINCE CONSORT' STEAMER. This beautiful vessel, the successful launch of which by Messrs Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co., we noticed some time ago, left the harbour on Tuesday morning for the purpose of testing her boilers and sailing qualities. The vessel has been considerably altered both internally and externally. Her stern has been rounded, and feathering floats fitted on her paddle wheels, while a superheater has been introduced. The vessel, which was under command of Captain Campbell, of the 'City of London', on clearing the harbour sailed as far out as Todhead, a distance of some 17 miles. She was then run down to the bay, where her speed at the one mile distance was tested. The mile was run thrice, the time on the several occasions being as follows: -4 minutes 13 seconds; 4 minutes 8 seconds; and 4 minutes 5 seconds. The vessel ran about 14 knots and hour, being about 1¼ miles beyond her former speed. Several speculations are afloat as to the probable future owners of the vessel, but it is generally surmised that the Leith and Clyde Shipping Company will be the purchasers. Whatever trade the 'Prince Consort' may be put in she will no doubt prove a very serviceable boat both for goods and passenger traffic."* 'Prince Consort' was launched by **J. & G. Thomson**, Govan, Glasgow on 2nd January 1858 for the Aberdeen, Leith and Clyde Steam Navigation Co. Ltd. and registered at Aberdeen. 11th March 1863, around 5pm she was wrecked entering Aberdeen Harbour. The local lifesaving crew using a Manby apparatus saved the crew and passengers. During the night she took the full force of the weather and broke in half. Hence the reconstruction by **Catto, Thomson, Buchanan & Co.**

1863, 8th October: The Stonehaven Journal reported as follows: *"We regret very much to be under the necessity of announcing the disappearance of well-known citizen, Mr George Thomson (of the firm of Messrs Catto, Thomson, and Co.) leaving behind him heavy liabilities. The nature and extent of the claims against him have been the subject of public rumour for the last few days. The amount is said to be between L.60,000 and L.70,000 (approx. £6.56 to £7.65 million in 2025). It is but too clear that Mr Thomson has been engaged in speculations which have proved his ruin, and the ruin of a previously honourable reputation. While mentioning these circumstances, we feel it our duty to state likewise, that Mr Thomson's failure will in no wise interfere with the business engagements of the firm with which he was connected."*

The **Hall brothers** owned half of the ropery business at the links of Catto, Thomson & Co. and are said to have been liable for debts of £25,000 (approx. £2.73 million in 2025), due to George Thomson's failure. **Alexander Hall & Co.** had also made losses on several vessels recently built.

1863, 18th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reporting on Scotch Bankrupts from the Edinburgh Gazette reported as follows: *"George Thomson, merchant in Aberdeen – Creditors meet in the Royal Hotel, Aberdeen, 20th November, at two o'clock – Melville & Lindesay, W. S., 150 George Street, Edinburgh, agents."*

1864, September: The firm of **Hall, Russell & Co.** was established in the former Aberdeen Iron Works premises in York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, which had been recently vacated

by **Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co. Hall, Russell & Co.** initially commenced by building steam engines and boilers. The **Hall brothers** established the company because the shipyard of **Alexander Hall & Co.** was in financial trouble due to underestimating the price of several vessels and due to a large financial loss at the rope and sail-works of Catto, Thomson & Co., Links, Footdee, which was part-owned by the **Hall brothers**. The **Hall brothers** thought that **Alexander Hall & Co.** might go bust. (An affidavit and claim dated 7th March 1864 showed that the late George Thomson owed **James Hall** partner of Catto, Thomson & Co. £1,845, 10s (£200k in 2025)). I could not find what he owed **William Hall**, if anything.

1864, 28th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published a list of subscribers regarding the wreck of the steamer '**Stanley**' which was lost at Tynemouth on 26th November 1864. The fund to be distributed to widows, children and other relatives affected by the tragedy.

Messrs Hall, Russell & Co., Engineers donated £2 and 2 shillings (approx. £245 in 2025).

1865, 8th February: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on the monthly meeting of the Town Council held 6th February 1865. *"Applications from **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, and from **Messrs J. Duthie, Sons & Co.**, shipbuilders, relative to a prolongation of their leases, were agreed to, to the extent of authorising the premises to be advertised for the extended periods."*

1865, 1st March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published an advertisement regarding the public roup (auction) of leases of yards in York Street, on behalf of the Aberdeen City Council. Among these were:

*"1. Ground or yard, lying on the west side of York Street, at present occupied by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** Upset yearly rent £12."*

*"2. Ground or yard, lying on the west side of said street at present under lease to **Messrs John Duthie, Sons & Co.** Upset yearly rent £15."*

1865, 8th March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported that harbour ground had been leased by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** for 19 years at the upset rent by Aberdeen City Town Council. This was probably the former timber yard directly opposite the entrance to the Aberdeen Iron Works in York Place, as shown on the 1866 feuing plan below.

1865, 2nd August: The following advertisement was published in the Aberdeen Press and Journal:



1865, 8th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported partly as follows: ***"EDUCATION IN THE FOOTDEE DISTRICT.** We lately gave some notes on the shipbuilding at this port, and showed that this important branch of handicraft is being largely extended – more especially as regards the element of iron, in part or whole, in shipbuilding. We observe immense buildings in course of construction by each of the three large shipbuilding firms at Footdee – **Messrs Hall, Russell, & Co., Messrs W. Hood & Co., and Messrs A. Duthie & Co.,** with the view especially of incorporating iron works with their operations. These gratifying extensions will, it may be hoped, give employment to even larger numbers of skilled workmen at these busy hives of industry. The question of affording house accommodation to these workmen will, doubtless, come into view by and bye. So, also, will that of education of the young in the locality. This latter subject is sufficiently important, we think to warrant our calling attention to it somewhat prominently. A school existed in the locality, under patronage of the Town Council, up to within a few years ago, when the building, or rather the site, being required by the Great North Railway, it was demolished; and the means of education were thus diminished, while the population has been increasing. There remains John Davidson's School, which has some special endowment, and is, we believe, about full; a small school at Footdee Square; and several adventure schools kept in private houses – and of course very limited in their operations. It is clear, however, that much more extensive accommodation is, or will immediately be wanted, for a district so populous...."*

1865, 29th November: The following advertisement was published in the Aberdeen Press and Journal:



Pig iron at this period was used to make cast iron or wrought iron, a necessity for any Iron Works. I'm sure **Hall, Russell & Co.** would have used lots of pig iron, hence the need for their own vessel to transport it. The vessel would probably have also been used to carry coal for use in the foundry.

1865, 29th November: **Hall, Russell & Co.** launched their first vessel, the iron-hulled steamer '**Douglas**' (874 tons). She was built under an **Alexander Hall & Co.** contract (Yard No. 244) for Douglas Lapraik, Esq., Hong-Kong. She was rigged as a 3 masted barque and had a 165 HP steam engine.



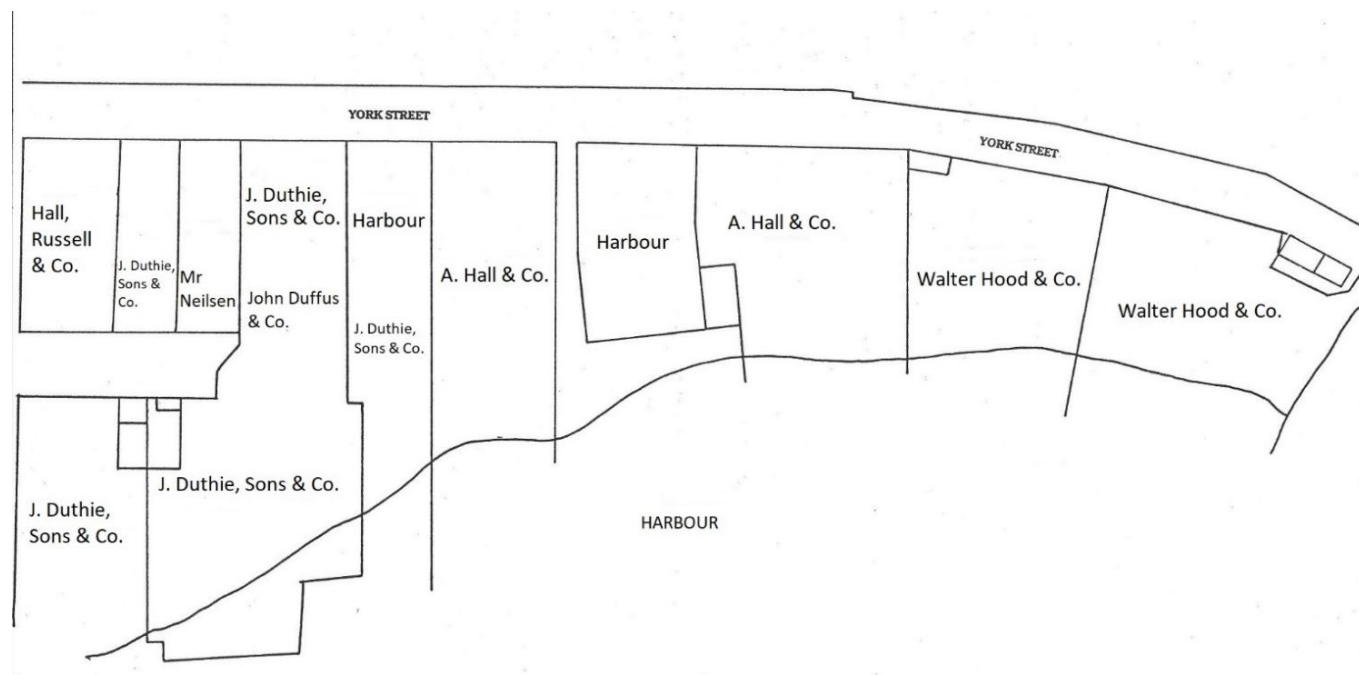
Aberdeen Iron Works as surveyed in 1866.

1866, 4th April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *"THE SHEAR POLES. A letter was read from **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, stating that the chain in connection with the shear poles had broke under a strain of 17 tons, and that the poles were themselves of inferior material. The Shoremaster said that at last meeting power had been taken to get a new chain, in consequence of its not being sufficiently strong. Mr Berry had got a plan, and was taking estimates for a new chain and all the appurtenances, and he (the Shoremaster) thought that by next meeting these would be laid before them for their approval. The matter was remitted back to the Committee."*

1866, 15th August: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published a list of contributors to the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society, 48 Dee Street, Aberdeen. Among the list of contributors was:

Hall, Russell & Co. £1, 1 shilling (approx. £110 in 2025).

1866, 26th November: The Iron steamer '**Taiwan**' (338 tons) LRS class 12A1, was launched from the shipyard of **Alexander Hall & Co.** built to the order of **John Cardno Couper** of **Hall, Russell & Co.** Her 2-cylinder steam engine of 72 HP and her boilers were made by **Hall, Russell & Co.** She sailed to Japan and was sold at Hong Kong in 1867.



A Feuing plan of the Footdee Shipyards, 1866.

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

The yard shown above leased by **Hall, Russell & Co.** (top left) was formerly a timber yard. It was where the Boiler Shop stood, and in the 1980's was used as a fabrication bay.

1867, 2nd January: The Aberdeen Press and Journal in the marriage's column, reported that on 27th December 1866, **Mr Oliver Shirer, Clerk, Aberdeen Iron Works** married Susannah, eldest daughter of Mr H. Franklin, Clerk of St Pauls Chapel in St Pauls Chapel.

1867, 30th January: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "*WRECK OF THE 'LIVERPOOL PACKET' ON THE BEACH. – On Wednesday evening (23rd Jan.), about nine o'clock, the schooner 'Liverpool Packet', of this port (Captain Smith) ran ashore at the beach, opposite the battery, and became a total wreck. There was a very heavy sea at the time, but the crew, consisting of four men and the captain, were got safely off by means of the lifeboat. The vessel went to pieces very rapidly. She belonged to **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, and was coming from Sunderland with coals. She had encountered rough weather when off Bervie, had been disabled, and sprung a leak. She arrived in the bay on Wednesday afternoon, and attempted to make the bar about six o'clock, but was met by two very large floes of ice floating out from the river with the receding tide, and was driven out again. None of the tugs was able to go out to tow the vessel in, and as she was rapidly becoming water-logged, the captain was compelled to run her ashore.*"

1867: Hall, Russell & Co. obtained the use of a launch-way from **Alexander Hall & Co.**

1867, 5th April: The Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser reported that **Hall, Russell, & Co.** launched the 3-masted schooner '**John Wesley**' (240 tons). Seems out-with Aberdeen there was a bit of confusion regarding vessels launched by **Hall, Russell & Co.**, and **Alexander Hall & Co.**, as the '**John Wesley**' was built by **Alexander Hall & Co.** yard number 251. I must say, who built what and who launched what took a bit of working out myself.

1867, 15th May: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on donations made to the Industrial Schools, Skene Square, amongst the donations was 16s, 6d donated by the employees of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd.**

1867, 20th July: the Dundee Advertiser reported as follows: *“ABERDEEN. THEFT. – At the Police Court yesterday, **William Hendry** (16), an apprentice **brass founder**, residing in Canal Lane, pleaded guilty to stealing 3 lbs. weight of brass, the property of his employers, **Hall, Russell, & Co.**, York Place. The Magistrate said he must try to put a stop to the practice of apprentices robbing their employers. He would, therefore, pass the same sentence that he did two days previously upon a lad for the same offence – viz., thirty days’ imprisonment.”*

1867: **Alexander Hall Wilson**, nephew of **James and William Hall** was appointed as a partner and took the job of **Shipyard Manager**. He had been trained at **Alexander Hall & Co.** as a **shipwright** and later spent some time at the shipyard of **Barclay Curle & Co.** in Glasgow building iron-hulled vessels. **Alexander Hall Wilson** was brought up by his aunt and uncle **James** and Christina **Hall** who had no children of their own. His real parents were Captain A. Wilson and Ann Wilson of Macduff.

1867, August: **Alexander Hall Wilson** (d.1899), nephew of brothers **William and James Hall** (son of their sister Ann (1808 to 1843)) was appointed as **yard manager** after **James Hall** gave him half of his shares in the company. (**A. Hall Wilson** was brought up by his aunt and uncle **James Hall** and his wife Christina Wilson (c1808 to 1866) as their own son, **James Hall** and his wife were childless). **A. Hall Wilson** had been trained at **Alexander Hall & Co.** as a **shipwright** and had previously worked on building iron vessels at **Barclay Curle**, shipbuilders, of Elderslie Dockyard, Whiteinch, Glasgow (Established 1818). His real parents were Captain A. Wilson and Ann Wilson of Macduff.

1867, 6th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on subscriptions to the Building Fund of the Footdee Public School, several shipbuilders gave generous donations as follows:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| James and William Hall , shipbuilders | £30. (approx. £3,000 in 2025). |
| John Duthie , shipbuilder. | £50. (approx. £5,000 in 2025). |
| Alexander Duthie , shipbuilder. | £10. (approx. £1,000 in 2025). |
| Robert Duthie , shipbuilder. | £10. (approx. £1,000 in 2025). |
| Walter Hood & Co. , shipbuilders. | £50. (approx. £5,000 in 2025). |
| Cornelius Thompson , shipbuilder. | £10. (approx. £1,000 in 2025). |
| Hall, Russell & Co. | £20. (approx. £2,000 in 2025). |
| John Duthie of Cairnbulg. | £50. (approx. £5,000 in 2025). |
| Blaikie Brothers , Footdee Iron Works. | £20. (approx. £2,000 in 2025). |

1867, 17th December: The London Evening Standard reported as follows: *“**STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT IN THE SCOTCH IRON TRADE.** – A strike on the part of the men, and a lock-out on that of the masters, says the Scotsman, occurred in the case of founders in all the ironworks on Friday. The works where the strike has been general are those of **Messrs***

Blaikie Brothers; Messrs Hall, Russell, & Co.; Messrs James Abernethy & Co., Ferryhill; Messrs William McKinnon & Co.; and Messrs Barrie, Henry & Co. Of course, founding being only one branch of their business, the other workmen continue as before, and consequently the number of men out of work is not so large.”

1868, 8th January: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reporting on subscriptions for the widows and orphans of the ‘**Ophelia**’ and the ‘**Malcolm Brown**’ stated that **Hall Russell & Co.’s Works** donated £2 and 4 shillings (Approx. £235 in 2025). (Among the other donations was local shipowner George Thompson Jnr of Pitmedden who donated £5. (Approx £500 in 2025)).

1868, 23rd January: The John o’ Groat Journal reported as follows: “About seven weeks ago the iron founders, both in this city and the south, gave intimation that wages were to be reduced ten per cent, after that date. What took place in Glasgow and the other large centres of the iron trade, when this notice was posted up, I cannot tell; but in Aberdeen a deputation waited on the masters, stating that they did not object to a reduction of one shilling per week, but if they, the masters, persisted in stopping two shillings, the men would ‘shut the shops’, and work on under protest until their demands were complied with. It is often a serious matter to the masters when their shops are shut, and nothing exasperates them more than to be told by their men that they will shut their shops. The consequence of this threat on the part of the men was that the masters gave intimation that, if the moulders did not work on in the usual way, and at the reduced pay, they would all be locked out at a certain date, and locked out they were to a man at the time specified; one firm that had not given warning, paid a fortnight’s wages instead, so that seventy moulders were paid off on one night, and no one left in the foundries except apprentices. Some of the works are now pretty well supplied with Englishmen, and what the union men call ‘nobs’ from Glasgow. The other branches in the iron trade do not at all sympathise with the moulders in their present demands. Their wages at the reduction averaged twenty nine shillings a week, and considering that trade is dull at present, it is the general opinion of the working community here that they should have submitted to the reduction, and not thrown so many labourers out of employment at this season of the year. It is necessary that I explain what is meant by ‘shutting the shop’. When a shop is what the moulder’s union call shut, it matters not how busy the master be, he cannot take on more hands, nor will they who are in his employ work a minute after six o’clock under any circumstances. The metal may be in the ladles all ready for pouring into the moulds, but after six o’clock no man will put a hand to it until six o’clock the next morning. No occurrence of this kind has taken place during this contest, the masters taking care to have the blast on early in the day, and the casting over by six o’clock; but it is a difficult thing to do this always in a foundry, or to avoid being detained half an hour occasionally with particular castings. About three years ago the moulders in Aberdeen demanded an advance of 5 percent on their wages, they got it; a short time after they demolished another advance of 1 percent; it was refused; and the union shut the shops. In **Hall, Russell. & Co.’s** works, an engine sole plate, of about 8 tons, was ready for what is technically called pouring. The metal was run

off into the ladles, everything was ready, but six o'clock came, the moulders put on their coats and walked away. The foreman tried to finish the cast with the aid of the labourers, but they failed. The cast was lost, and had to be broken up. If you ask a moulder what is intended by shutting a shop, he will very possibly tell you, in a frank off-handed way, "O, it's just putting on the screw, to make the masters employ". The position of parties at this date is, the men will not go into any shop where a non-union man is at work, and the masters are determined to employ any man that suits the purpose. Notices to that effect are posted up in all the works, and the men may resume work immediately, if they comply with the regulations under which the engineers, patternmakers, boilermakers, and blacksmiths, are working. I leave it to the readers of the Journal to say it it be unreasonable to ask them to do so."

1868, 16th July: The John o' Groat Journal reported as follows: *"A NEW ERA IN HERRING FISHING. – The Fraserburgh correspondent of the Peterhead Sentinel says: - On Sunday morning, a steam-boat, destined for the fishing, arrived in our harbour. She is owned by Mr William Strachan, Inverallochy, and was built by **Messrs Hall, Russell, & Co.**, Aberdeen. This speaks well for the enterprise of our fishermen. As might be expected, many objections are made to this innovation, and not a few as to her capacity and construction; but all these difficulties, with a little time, may be got rid of; and, if her owners have the pluck to give her a fair trial, and make what alterations circumstances and use will suggest, we have little doubt of her ultimate success, and the final adoption of the system. The Buchan Observer says: - Boats are now arriving daily for the prosecution of this fishing; and already a large number are in the harbour. Among others we observe one of rather larger dimensions than usual, fitted up with steam-engine and screw propeller. This is certainly a novelty in the fishing way, and many gloomy forebodings are expressed as to the success of the enterprise. Indeed, it is generally said that the craft must prove a failure. She has been built by **Messrs Hall**, Aberdeen, for Mr William Strachan, 'Smith'."*

According to an advertisement in the Aberdeen Press and Journal, 9th February 1870, this fishing boat was named '**Frederick**' (23 tons) and was built by **Alexander Hall & Co.**, but oddly she is not recorded on the yard build list. She was the first steam-driven fishing boat built by **Alexander Hall & Co.**

1868, 19th August: The Dundee Advertiser, reported as follows: *"PIC-NIC.— Saturday afternoon, the boilermakers in employment of **Messrs Hall, Russell, & Co.**, held their annual picnic at Cults. About fifty couples were present and after tea had been served dancing, racing, and other amusements were engaged in. The company returned town with the last train."*

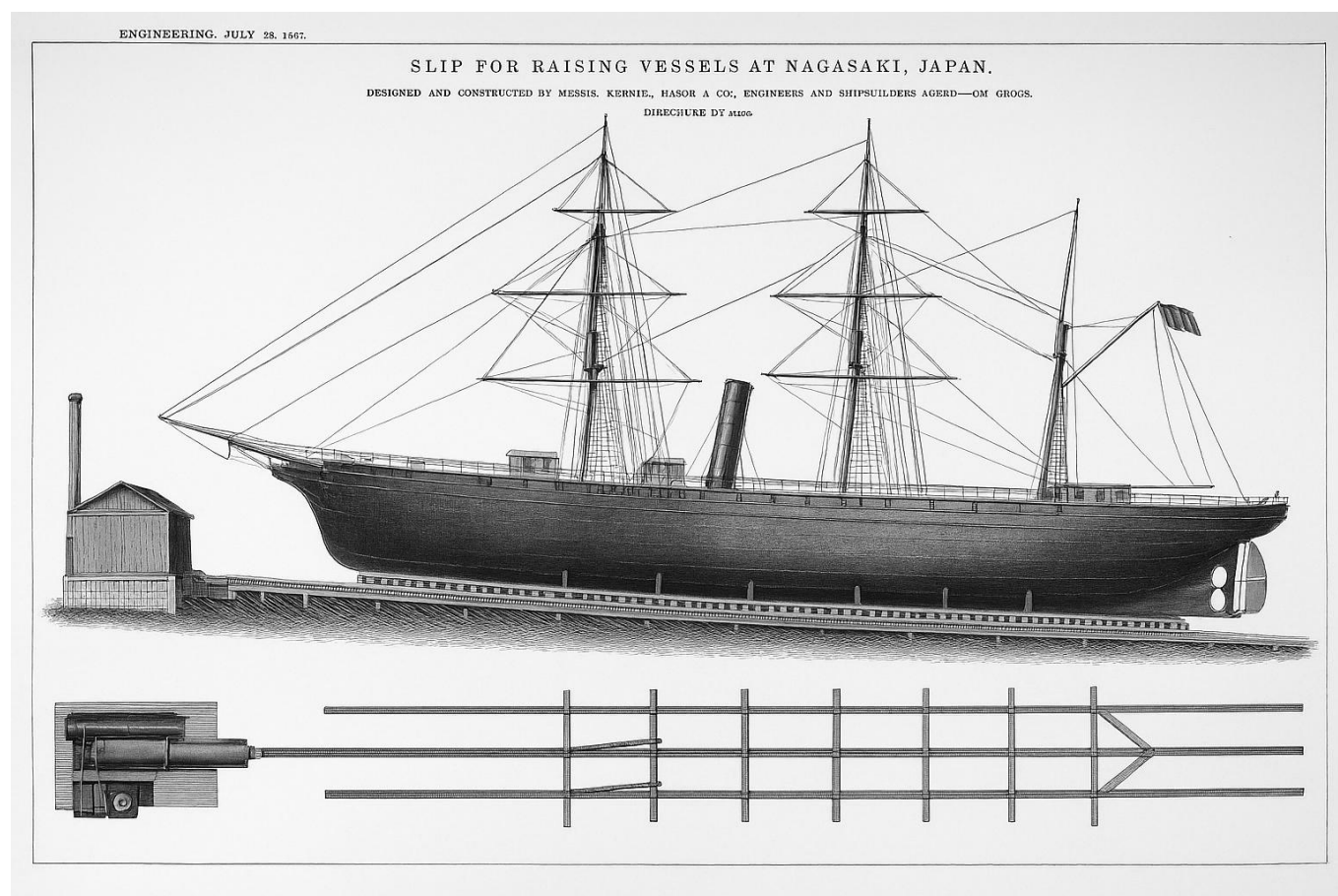
1868, 16th September: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published a list of contributors to the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society, 140 Union Street, Aberdeen. Among the list of contributors were the following shipbuilders:

Hall, Russell & Co. £1, 1 shilling (approx. £110 in 2025).

Alexander Hall & Co. £2, 2 shillings (approx. £220 in 2025).

John Duthie Sons & Co. £2, 2 shillings (approx. £220 in 2025).

1868: Hall, Russell & Co., built the engines and boilers for the Japanese Government gunboat '**Ho Sho Maru**' launched by **Alexander Hall & Co.** on 4th July 1868. The Aberdeen Press and Journal 8th July 1868 reported that the vessel "...will be fitted up with a pair of horizontal condensing engines of 60 horse-power, which are now being completed by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen Iron Works.**" (The vessel was ordered via the Glover Brothers).



*Slip built by **Hall, Russell & Co.** as a kit for erection in Kosuge, Nagasaki, Japan.
(Engineering magazine 14th July 1868).*

1868: Hall, Russell & Co. built a patent slip as a kit to be installed at Kosuge, Nagasaki, Japan. This was built under a contract with the Glover Brothers, shipbrokers, No. 19 Marischal Street, Aberdeen. The kit was shipped to Kosuge in the barque '**Helen Black**' (305 tons) which was built at the same time by **Alexander Hall & Co.** (Yard No. 257). Fraserburgh born Thomas Blake Glover (1838 to 1911) employed Aberdonian William Blaikie to oversee the work done in Aberdeen and the installation of the new slip in Kosuge. This slip was installed specifically to modernise ship-repair facilities in Japan. Glover later sold his share of the dock to the Japanese Government, who leased the dock to Mitsubishi in 1884. This was the beginning of what rose to be today's Japanese industrial giant.

The Kosuge Slip, Nagasaki was 220 feet long and had a capacity of between 1,200 and 1,600 tons and the winch was powered by a 2-cylinder vertical steam engine. The slip opened 19th January 1869 when the first vessel was lifted up out of the harbour.

1869, 8th January: The Aberdeen Free Press reported as follows: *“SOCIAL MEETING. – The annual social meeting held in connection with the extensive iron works of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, took place in the Music Hall Buildings on Thursday night (Hogmanay). There were present, along with the partners of the company, a number of gentlemen connected with the Harbour. The company was very large. After tea, addresses were delivered by several gentlemen; and a concert – the songs contributed by amateur vocalists – followed, in which considerable talent was shown both by ladies and gentlemen. The floor was cleared for dancing shortly after ten o’clock, from which hour till an early hour next morning it was carried on with great spirit.”*



Kosuge Slip, Nagasaki.

1869, 30th March: The Aberdeen Free Press reported on the ‘**Jho Sho Maru**’, a steam driven corvette built by **Alexander Hall & Co.** for the Japanese Navy as follows: *“...her engines were 250 horse power nominally, but capable of being worked up to 1,000 horse power...The boilers are to be tubular, of extra large size, and of the newest construction. They will be fixed from a passage running just over the keel. **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** will supply them and the engine, which may be described as “horizontal, direct action”, and as having all the latest improvements. The propeller is to be of brass, and of course duplicates (spares) will be furnished of all the more important parts of the machinery likely to require renewal at sea.”*



‘Jho Sho Maru’. (Photographer unknown).

1869, 2nd April: The Aberdeen Free Press reported as follows: *“AN ABERDEEN-MADE PATENT SLIP IN JAPAN. – The Nagasaki Times of January 23rd, of which we have just received a copy, in noticing the patent slip made by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, says: - “The site for the slip has been well chosen, and looks expressly designed by nature for the purpose. A great portion of the ways are on the solid rock, it being necessary to pile only about 150 feet of their deepest portion. They are warranted to support a vessel of 1,200 tons, which we think will be quite sufficient for the requirements of the port. The whole of*

*the plant and machinery, together with the vessels to bring it out, was made by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, of Aberdeen; and it will, doubtless, be gratifying to that well-known firm to hear of the unqualified success of the undertaking.” **Mr Blaikie**, the superintendent of the work of erection of the slip, is deservedly lauded by the *Nagasaki Times* for the manner in which he carried out operations. The managers are Messrs Glover & Co.” (The vessel was the wooden barque ‘**Helen Black**’ (305 tons) launched by **Alexander Hall & Co.** in 1868).*

1869, 30th April: The Aberdeen Free Press reported as follows: “*Sheriff Court, Aberdeen. REPARATION INJURIES TO PERSON. **ROBERT ADAMSON, JOINER, v. HALL, RUSSELL, AND CO., ABERDEEN.** The nature of this case is disclosed by the following judgement pronounced by Sheriff Thomson on Wednesday last: —Having resumed consideration of the cause, finds that the defenders have proved that it was impractical to fence the hatchway down which the pursuer fell, and that his injuries arose from his own want of care; therefore sustains the defence, and assoilzies the Defenders, with costs. Signed, JOHN COMRIE THOMSON.*

*NOTE: - At the time of the casualty in question, the ship on board of which it occurred was in a skeleton unfinished state. It was therefore necessary for the workmen to exercise the greatest care in moving about the vessel, particularly after daylight had gone. On the other hand, it was the duty of the owners to see that every precaution for securing the safety of their workmen was taken, consistently with the carrying on of the necessary operations in the ship. It is abundantly proved that to have fenced the hatch down which the Pursuer fell, was, at the stage which the ship had reached, was an unprecedented and impracticable thing. No blame therefore can attach to the Defenders for the absence of a fence around the hatching. The only other ground upon which damages are sought is, want of sufficient lighting. Up to the ringing of the six o'clock bell, there was abundance of gas-light aboard, but almost immediately afterwards some of the jets were extinguished. This was a natural thing to do, as work had ceased for the day; but the Defenders were, undoubtedly, bound to have as much light until all their workmen had had reasonable time to quit the vessel as would enable them to do so with safety.- On this part of the case, there is some conflict of evidence. James Addison, one of the Pursuer's witnesses, depones that it was not want of light that made Pursuer fall!. In this opinion, Wilson and Moir concur. Other witnesses think that there were no lights burning at the hatch, though none say that that accounted sufficiently for Pursuer's fall. The whole evidence discloses that, whether the jet at the hatchway was burning or not, a very bright light was reflected from the door D, upon the edge of the hatch. In the absence of any very distinct evidence, of how many gas jets were actually burning at the moment the Pursuer fell, it is satisfactory to have, from the mouth of more than one independent witness, the Pursuer's own account of the matter at the time of, or immediately after, his injury. He told **G. Will** that he tripped, and fell into the hold, making no complaint of want of light; while, to several other witnesses, he explained his fall, by saying “that he forgot the hatchway”. The case is not to be dealt with on the same*

footing as if the pursuer had been a total stranger to the vessel. He knew the position of the hatch, and should have walked warily.

For Pursuer—Dunn & Clark, advocates. For Defender Harvey Hall, advocate.”

This is just one example of an accident which occurred in a shipyard, there are many more instances. Shipyards were dangerous places, especially back in the 1860's when health and safety wasn't given as high a priority as it is today. Even, comparing the 1980's when I worked in the shipyards to the health and safety today, it is “night and day”, workers today are protected by the Health and Safety at Work Act of 1974 and associated Acts such as the Personal Protective Equipment Act first introduced in 1992.

1869, 29th May: James Hall (b.c1804) died of a heart attack. He is buried in Macduff Parish Church cemetery with his wife Christina nee Wilson (1808 to 1866) who hailed from Macduff. **James Hall** had gone to assist in subduing a fire that had broken out in George Milne & Co.'s timber yard on the south side of Provost Blaikie's Quay, near where the Japanese Warship '**Jho Sho Maru**' (1,459 tons) was berthed, looking to prevent the fire spreading to the ship. Through his over exertion it brought on a heart attack, which instantly proved fatal. See Appendix for more information.

1869, 9th June: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“FALL INTO THE HOLD OF A SHIP. – On Thursday, a boy, named **James Shand**, son of James Shand, residing in Peacock's Close, fell from the deck of a ship now lying in the shipyard of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, Footdee, into the hold, thereby severely injuring himself. The lad is one of the apprentices of the above firm, and was playing during the dinner hour with a companion, and fell through a hatchway. Dr Macquibban saw the boy, and was of opinion that he was not fatally injured. He was taken to the Infirmary.”* This is just an example of a typical injury sustained in the shipyards at this period.

1869, 7th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published a large list of companies and persons in favour of the purchase of the Torry Farm, with a view to building a new bridge across the River Dee. Amongst the 1860 signatures were:

Hall, Russell & Co., shipbuilders.

Thomas Russell, shipbuilder.

William Hall, shipbuilder.

Alexander Hall Wilson, shipbuilder.

Alexander Hall & Co., shipbuilders.

And many other shipbuilders, shipowners, merchants and others.

1869, 14th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“PIC-NIC OF MESSRS HALL, RUSSELL & CO'S EMPLOYEES. – The workmen and others engaged at the foundry and shipbuilding yard of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, Footdee, enjoyed a pic-nic on Saturday afternoon, when they travelled by train to Cults station, and thence proceeded to a suitable piece of haugh land on the banks of the Dee, where the party, which numbered about 240 persons, spent several hours in a remarkably pleasant manner. There were keen*

competitions by a number of the men in various athletic exercise, while the younger members of the party, not a whit behind, took part in running and other competitions. Dancing occupied the attention of the fair sex and their partners for a considerable time. The company returned to town with the last train."

1869, 28th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published a list of contributors to the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society, 140 Union Street, Aberdeen. Among the list of contributors were the following shipbuilders:

Hall, Russell & Co. £1, 1 shilling (approx. £220 in 2025).

Alex. Hall & Co. £1, 1 shillings (approx. £220 in 2025).

John Duthie Sons & Co. £2, 2 shillings (approx. £220 in 2025).

Also, **George Thompson & Co.** (**Thompson** was Co-owner of **Walter Hood & Co.**)
£10, 10 shillings (approx. £2,200 in 2025).

1869, 2nd November: The Aberdeen Free Press reported as follows: *"The lifeboat crew were reported as re-engaged. A minute of committee in reference to tender at £65 for construction of a lifeboat carriage from **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, was read and approved of."*

1869, December: **Alexander Hall & Co.** was declared insolvent, and **William Hall** sold his share of **Hall, Russell & Co.** to **John Cardno Couper** (c1821 to 1902) of Craigiebuckler.¹ It looks like **William Hall** sold his share in **Hall, Russell & Co.** in order to make an attempt to save **Alexander Hall & Co.**

1869, 15th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *"We understand that Messrs Adam & Co., Marischal Street, have just contracted with **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, shipbuilders, Footdee, for the building of a large screw steamer, carrying over 1,100 tons burden, to steam not less than nine knots an hour on the small consumption of under nine cwt. of coal. The ship, of course, will be fitted up with all the latest improvements."*

The vessel was the cargo steamer '**Thomas Adam**' (886 tons) launched 29th June 1870.

1869, 29th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *"**ACCIDENT AT HALL, RUSSELL & Co. SHIPBUILDING YARD.** – On Thursday morning, shortly after seven o'clock, rather a serious accident occurred at the shipbuilding yard of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, in York Street. A young lad, an **apprentice**, named **James Kinnear**, who resides, we believe, in Longacre, was employed with several others at a crane, which was raising a pretty large boiler, when, one of the chains slipping all of a sudden, the boiler fell unexpectedly upon the young lad's left leg, crushing it in a frightful manner. He was quickly as possible extricated from beneath the boiler, and removed to the Royal Infirmary."*

1870, 24th August: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported, *"We are glad to hear that **Mr William Hall**, shipbuilder, has been able to effect an arrangement with the creditors of the late firm; and that he will soon recommence business as a shipbuilder in his former premises at Footdee."*

Vessels Built by Hall, Russell & Co. in the 1860's.

We are fortunate that a builders list exists for this shipbuilder. However, it must be noted that the yard numbers start off a little bit peculiarly, as the first vessel with a **Hall Russell** yard number is 166. It is therefore assumed that the numbers preceding 166 were allocated to individual engines or boilers rather than ships.

Yard numbers 244, 249, 256 and 262 were **Alexander Hall & Co.** contracts where **Hall, Russell & Co.** were sub-contracted to build their iron hulls.

| Year | Yard No. | Name | Rig | Construction | GRT | Owner | L x B x D (ft) |
|--------------------|----------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----|--|------------------------------|
| 1865 23 Nov. | 244 | Douglas | Steamer | Iron | 874 | Douglas Lapraik, Esq., Hong-Kong. | 242'7" x 28' x 19'9" |
| 1866 26 Nov. | 249 | Taiwan | Steamer | Iron | 338 | John Cardno Couper. | 175' x 24'6" x 12'6" |
| 1868 10 Mar. | 256 | Kwang Tung | Steamer | Iron | 492 | D. Lapraik & Co., Hong Kong. | 220' x 31' x 14' |
| 1868 | 262 | Fire Fly | Steam Yacht T/ tug | Iron | ? | Admiralty. | 62'2" x 13' x 7' |
| 1868 26 Nov. | 166 | Luke Bruce | Barque | Iron | 320 | B. Darbyshire, Liverpool. | 138.5' x 25.2' x 14' |
| 1869 19 Oct. | 167 | Umvoti | Barque | Iron | 465 | J. T. Rennie, Aberdeen. | 152'5" x 24'7" x 15'9" |
| 1869 11 Sep. | 168 | Inverness | Barque | Composite | 722 | J. & R. Grant, London. | 180'5" x 32'1" x 19'1" |
| 1869 2 Dec. | 169 | Wen Yu Maru | Steam Gunboat | Composite | 360 | Glover Brothers, Aberdeen / Japanese Navy. | 126' x 24.5' x 10' |

Above dates are date of launch.

Douglas (1865).

She was built to carry general cargo and passengers and intended for trade at China. The newspapers report her launch from the yard of **Hall, Russell & Co.**, however her yard number is an **Alexander Hall & Co.** number (244). Her build contract was with **Alexander Hall & Co.** however she was built by **Hall, Russell & Co.**, my guess the reason for this was that **Hall, Russell & Co.** had men experienced working with iron, and **Alexander Hall & Co.** didn't.

1865, 29th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *"LAUNCH OF AN IRON STEAMER. — We have very great pleasure in recording the launch, on Thursday, from the yard of **Messrs Hall, Russell, & Company**, of a finely-modelled, iron screw steamer. The steamer will be barque rigged, and fitted with a pair of direct acting engines, of 165 horse-power, nominal. She is 250 feet in length, 29 feet 6 inches beam, and 21 feet 6 inches moulded depth. Her tonnage is 900 tons B.M., or 873 register, gross. All preparations being completed, the launch took place at 3.30, P.M., in presence of a large number of spectators; and, as the ship moved into the water. Miss Baker stepped forward, and gracefully gave her the name "**Douglas**." The launch was very successfully accomplished, and the appearance of the "**Douglas**" in the water, with her beautiful lines, is very fine. She has been built to the order of Messrs James Morrison & Co., London, and is owned by Douglas Lapraik, Esq., Hong-Kong, and several gentlemen in this country recently returned from China. The "**Douglas**" will be commanded by Capt. Baker, who has had great experience on the coast of China, where the vessel is intended to be employed. The fitting up of the vessel is, altogether, very superior; the cabin accommodation is ample, and the furnishings all in the most tasteful and elegant style; and in the construction of both ship and machinery, all the most modern improvements have been included. Several practical and scientific men from China, who had examined the ship, and were present at the launch, expressed themselves very favourably as to her capabilities and adaptation to the China trade. The launch of the "**Douglas**" is an event of unusual interest, as being the first launch of an iron vessel at Aberdeen for fully twenty years — the "**Queen**," formerly belonging to the Leith and Clyde Co., being, we believe, the last iron steamer built here. We fully expect that this launch, so successfully accomplished, is but the herald of many others of a like character, from the works of the enterprising firm who have turned out the **Douglas**."*

The iron steamer '**Queen**' (614 tons) was launched by **William Simpson & Co.**, Aberdeen Iron Works on 29th August 1844, for the Aberdeen, Leith & Clyde Shipping Co. However, she appears on the yard list for **Alexander Hall & Co.**, as yard number 145. It looks like **Alexander Hall & Co.** had the contract to build her, but sub-contracted the build of her iron hull to **William Simpson & Co.**

Douglas (1865). (Continued).

| | |
|---|--|
| Vessel Name(s) | Douglas. |
| Yard Number | 244. Alexander Hall & Co. number. |
| Rig | Screw steamer, barque rigged, 3 masts, 2 decks, probably a round stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Engines | 2 steam engines producing 165 horse power, built by Hall, Russell & Co. |
| Launch Date | 23 rd November 1865. |
| Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i> | Robert Ellis Baker , London, master mariner. |
| Registered Port | London. Official No.: 53246. |
| GRT | 873 tons, (615 tons net). |
| Length | 250 feet. (76.2m). |
| Breadth | 29 feet, 6 inches. (8.99m). |
| Depth | 21 feet, 6 inches. (6.55m). |
| Construction | Iron. |
| Figurehead | Shield. |
| Classification | Unknown. |
| Other information | <p>1866, 13th March: the Dundee Courier reported that while on passage from Aberdeen to Hong King she pulled into Gibraltar with a broken shaft.</p> <p>1867, 26th January: owned by Douglas Lapraik, merchant, No. 126 Piccadilly, London.</p> |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | <p>1872, 6th May, 10.10 a.m.: — <i>"HONG KONG - The Douglas (s), Toppin, hence to Foo-chow-foo, has struck on a sunken rock in Namoa Straits and will probably be a total loss; opium, specie, crew, and passengers saved."</i> (Lloyd's List - Tuesday 7th May 1872).</p> <p>A Naval Court inquiry held at Hong Kong 31st May states she was on passage from Swatow to Amoy, and the master had his certificate suspended for nine months.</p> |

Douglas (1865). (Continued).

1866, 14th February: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“TRIAL TRIP OF THE NEW STEAMER ‘DOUGLAS’. – The screw steamer ‘Douglas’, just finished for Captain R. E. Baker by Messrs Hall, Russell & Co., and intended for trading in the China Seas, was yesterday put on her final trial trip. Her dimensions are – length, 244 feet; breadth, 28¾ feet; depth to spar deck, 21½ feet; builder’s tonnage, 950; gross register, 873; net, 616; propelled by two direct acting inverted engines, of the nominal horsepower of 165; effective horse-power, 700. The vessel left our docks at 10.30 am, under the special command of Captain Campbell, harbour master, having on board several nautical gentlemen, including Captain Baker, Captain Duthie, Urquhart, and Main, Mr J. C. Couper, Mr William Hall, Mr Russell, engineer, etc. She proceeded to sea, where a heavy ground swell awaited her, through which she passed in gallant style, not only proving the efficiency of the engines, but also the capabilities of the ship as a sea boat. The vessels head was turned northwards to the bottom of our bay, and on coming south, she ran the measured mile in four minutes, twenty-five seconds, being an average of twelve and a half knots per hour. On going south of the harbour, and on returning along the land, where distances are so well known, the speed was proved to be 13 knots per hour. The vessel in every respect has been declared to be to the entire satisfaction of the owners, and we congratulate the builders on the resuscitation of a branch of business in our quarter which is destined to supersede the more ancient propulsion by sails alone, for which, hitherto, they have been favourably known in the nautical world. The internal fittings of the ‘Douglas’ are unique of their kind, and will amply repay a visit while at the Quay here. Her departure direct for Hong Kong is fixed for 20th instant, and we will watch with anxiety the time she occupies on her passage to China.”*

Taiwan (1866).

She was built to carry cargo, twenty first-class passengers and eighty second-class passengers and intended for service in China and Japan, hence the name. Her first registered owner was **John Cardno Couper**, Aberdeen who was a co-owner of **Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd.** who built her engines.

According to the Aberdeen bankruptcy court of January 1870, **William Hall** deponed that **Alexander Hall & Co.** had an interest in her and lost £1,700 on her eventual sale. (Approx. £176,000 in 2025).


The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette, 3rd December 1866, reported as follows: *"LAUNCHES. From the building-yard of **Messrs. A. Hall and Co.**, Aberdeen, for Messrs **Hall, Russell & Co.** Engineers, a handsome iron screw steamer of 400 tons gross register, built to class 12 years A1 on Lloyd's Register. Her dimensions are: — Length, 175 feet; breadth, 24 feet 6 inches; depth, 12 feet 6 inches. The vessel received the name of '**Taiwan**' (being the Chinese name for the Island of Formosa), and made a most successful launch. The engines and boilers are already on board, and the vessel will leave Aberdeen under steam for Hong Kong direct early in January, under the command of Captain Alfred Roper. The '**Taiwan**' is a saloon steamer, having all her cabins on deck, and being intended for warm latitudes, is fitted with every appliance for ventilation and convenience. The vessel is specially designed for navigating rivers in China and Japan."*

The Glasgow Herald - Wednesday 24th July 1867, reported as follows: *"LOSS OF A CHINA TRADER. - The vessel reported lost in our columns yesterday is the screw-steamer '**Taiwan**', 299 tons, 72 horse-power, built by **Hall & Co.** of Aberdeen, and owned by her builders. The '**Taiwan**' was on a voyage from Foo-chow-foo for London, laden with tea, and was totally lost on 20th June. Nothing is said regarding the fate of the crew. She was commanded by Captain A. Roper."*

1867, 29th August: The Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette, reported as follows: *"Foo-chow-foo, July 6. — The wreck of the '**Taiwan**', Moore, hence London, which was lost in the Min 20th June, has been sold, together with 1,300 packages of tea."* (Seems she was repaired, as she appears in Lloyds Register 1868 to 1873 owner **A. Hall & Co.**).

1867, 21st December: **John Cardno Couper** 64 shares to John Stewart Lapraik and Alexander Maglashan Heaton, merchants in Hong Kong - Lapraik and Heaton empowered to sell ship at Hong Kong or elsewhere in China or Japan for not less than 60,000 dollars Hong Kong within 24 months.

Taiwan (1866). (Continued).

| Vessel Name(s) | Taiwan. |
|--|---|
| Yard Number | 249. Alexander Hall & Co. number. |
| Rig | Screw steamer, brig rigged, 2 masts, 1 decks, unknown stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Engines | 2-cylinder, steam engine producing 72 nominal horse power, built by Hall, Russell & Co. , single screw. |
| Launch Date | 26 th November 1866. |
| Owner(s) <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i> | John Cardno Couper Esq. , Craigiebuckler Estate, Aberdeenshire. |
| Registered Port | Aberdeen. Official No.: 53260. |
| GRT | 337 tons. 218 tons net. |
| Length | 174 feet, 9 inches. (53.26m). |
| Breadth | 24 feet, 2 inches. (7.37m). |
| Depth | 12 feet, 4 inches. (3.76m). |
| Construction | Iron, with four bulkheads. |
| Figurehead | Shield. |
| Classification | Lloyds Register of Shipping: Class 12A1.  Built under special survey. A&CP: Anchors and Cables Proved at a Public Machine. |
| Other information | Build cost £6,500, plus £5,200 for engines and boilers. (Approx. £672,000 and £538,000 in 2025). 1867, 21st January: She sailed from Aberdeen for Hong Kong. By 1867, 21st June: She arrived at Hong Kong. 1868, June: Sold at Nagasaki, Japan. |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | Unknown. |

Kwang Tung (1868).

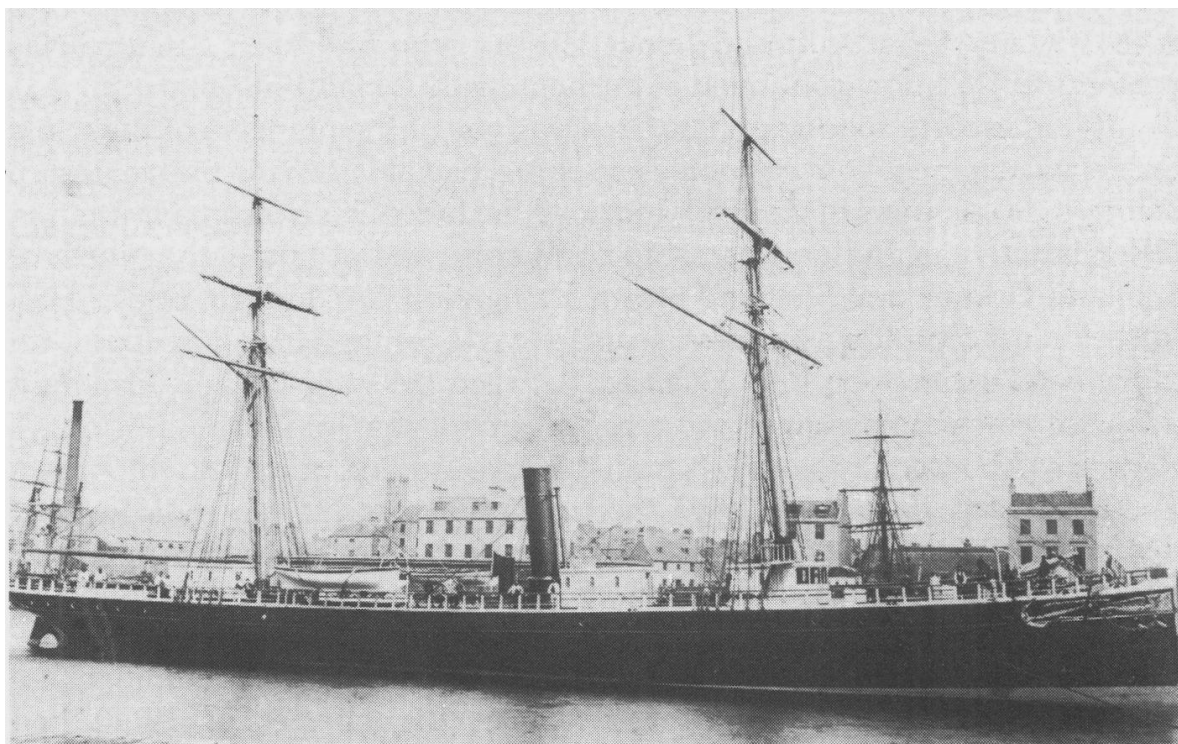
She was built by **Hall, Russell & Co.**, however she was on the order books for **Alexander Hall & Co.** as yard No. 256. This shows the close relationship between the two companies.

She was built for the Navy for use in the China Sea and named after a province in southeast China Guandong (aka Kwangtung) which borders Hong Kong and Macau.

1868, 11th March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“LAUNCH OF AN IRON SCREW STEAMER.** – Yesterday, **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, launched from their building-yard at Footdee, a fine iron screw steam vessel of the following dimensions: - length, 220 feet; breadth of beam, 31 feet; depth, 22 feet 9 inches; builder's measurement, 1,440 tons. She is fitted with a pair of direct-acting condensing engines, of 170 horse power, and has extra large boilers, with all the modern appliances for saving fuel. She is made wholly of iron, her decks being of teak wood, and she is fitted with a spar deck, fore and aft. Her rig will be that of a brig, with appliances for striking the yards and top-masts, with the utmost facility, on deck, before a sudden storm – an arrangement which will prove of an immense advantage in the China seas, to which she is destined. Her internal fittings will be of the finest description, accommodation being afforded for 30 first-class, 15 second-class, and 200 third-class passengers, besides a large space for cargo, which will be stowed and removed by means of two steam winches fitted up on deck. The vessel is owned by the firm of Douglas Lapraik & Co., Hong Kong, and is intended as consort to the screw steamer **“Douglas”**, which was built in the same yard some time ago, and which has given great satisfaction on the coast of China for the accommodation she affords to passengers, her speed, economy of fuel, and carrying power. She will be commanded by Captain Shepherd, whose long experience will doubtless enable him to give a good account of her. The launch was accomplished very successfully, and as she glided into the water Miss Strachan gracefully christen her **“Quang-Tung”**.

1868, 29th April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“TRIAL TRIP.** – The screw steamer **‘Kwang Tung’**, recently launched by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, was taken out to the bay on Monday afternoon, under command of Captain Campbell, to undergo the usual trial of speed. After several runs in the Bay, the vessel was placed on the measured distance, which was accomplished in 4 min, 27 sec., giving a speed of 13½ knots per hour, which result was considered highly satisfactory to those particularly interested.”

1868, 30th April: The Dundee Courier reported as follows: **“Report of trials of ‘Kwang Tung’** under command of Capt. Campbell in Aberdeen Bay. After several initial runs covered "measured distance" in 4 mins 27 sec., giving speed of 13½ miles per hour... considered highly satisfactory to those particularly interested".

1868: Kwang Tung. (Continued).

*Steamship 'Kwang Tung' in Aberdeen Harbour.
(Photographer unknown, courtesy of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums).*

| Vessel Name(s) | Kwang Tung. |
|--|---|
| Yard Number | 256 (Alexander Hall & Co. yard number). |
| Rig | Steamer, brig rigged, 2 masts, 2 decks, a round stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Engines | Fitted with a pair of direct-acting condensing engines, of 170 horse-power, and extra-large boilers. |
| Launch Date | 10 th March 1868. |
| Owner(s) (No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets). | D. Lapraik & Co., Hong Kong (64). (Douglas Lapraik (1818 to 1869), The Oaks, Acton, Middlesex). |
| Registered Port | Aberdeen. Official No.: 60681. |
| GRT | 492 tons. |
| Length | 220 feet. (67.06m). |
| Breadth | 31 feet. (9.45m). |
| Depth | 22 feet 9 inches. (6.93m). |
| Draft | 14 feet. (4.27m). |
| Construction | Iron. (Riveted). |
| Figurehead | Not fitted. |
| Classification | Unknown. |
| Other information | Build cost: £21,358. (Approx. £2.1 million in 2025). |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | 1876, 19th April: She was wrecked near Osaka, Japan. |

Firefly. (1868).


1868, 8th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *(From Times of 6th July 1868).* The official trial of the new screw steam vessel, constructed for the Admiralty by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** of Aberdeen, the well-known builders of some of the fastest of our clipper ships, for use in connection with the work of the extension of Chatham Dockyard, was made on Friday, under the superintendence of the officials of the establishment. The new vessel has a nominal engine power of 30 horses, but the machinery is capable of being worked up to three times that power. She left Aberdeen at 8 o'clock on the evening of the 24th ult., and came to anchor off Chatham Dockyard at 4 o'clock p.m., on the 27th ult., having during the run from Aberdeen, put into Whitby for a supply of coals. The voyage from Flamborough Head to Chatham – a distance of about 250 miles – was performed in 26½ hours. After a searching inspection of hull and machinery by the officials, lasting several days, the steamer was taken to the measured mile outside the harbour for the usual trial of speed, when the average obtained was 9.25 knots per hour. On returning up the river, six lighters, each laden with 60 tons of gravel, dredged from the shoals at the extension works, Gillingham, were towed by the steamer against a strong ebb tide to the dockyard. A highly favourable report has been made to the Admiralty of the result of the trials, and the vessel has been handed over to the dockyard officials."

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Vessel Name(s) | Firefly. |
| Yard Number | 262 - Alexander Hall number. |
| Rig | Yacht / tug. |
| Engines | Steam, 30nhp, single screw. |
| Launch Date | 2 nd quarter of 1868. |
| Owner(s) | Admiralty. |
| Registered Port | Unknown. Official No.: n/a. |
| GRT | Unknown. |
| Length | 62 feet. (18.90m). |
| Breadth | 13 feet. (3.96m). |
| Depth | 6 feet, 8 inches. (2.03m). |
| Construction | Probably iron. |
| Figurehead | Not fitted. |
| Classification | Unknown. |
| Other Information | -- |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | Unknown. (1908 according to www.pdavis.nl). |

It is thought the '**Fire Fly**' was a basin tug, by this we mean she would work around the basin and not go further afield. She would not have had overnight living accommodation, just a galley for hot drinks and food and a forward cabin for the crew to escape from inclement weather when not working. Her crew would live ashore in barracks or in their own homes.

Luke Bruce (1868).

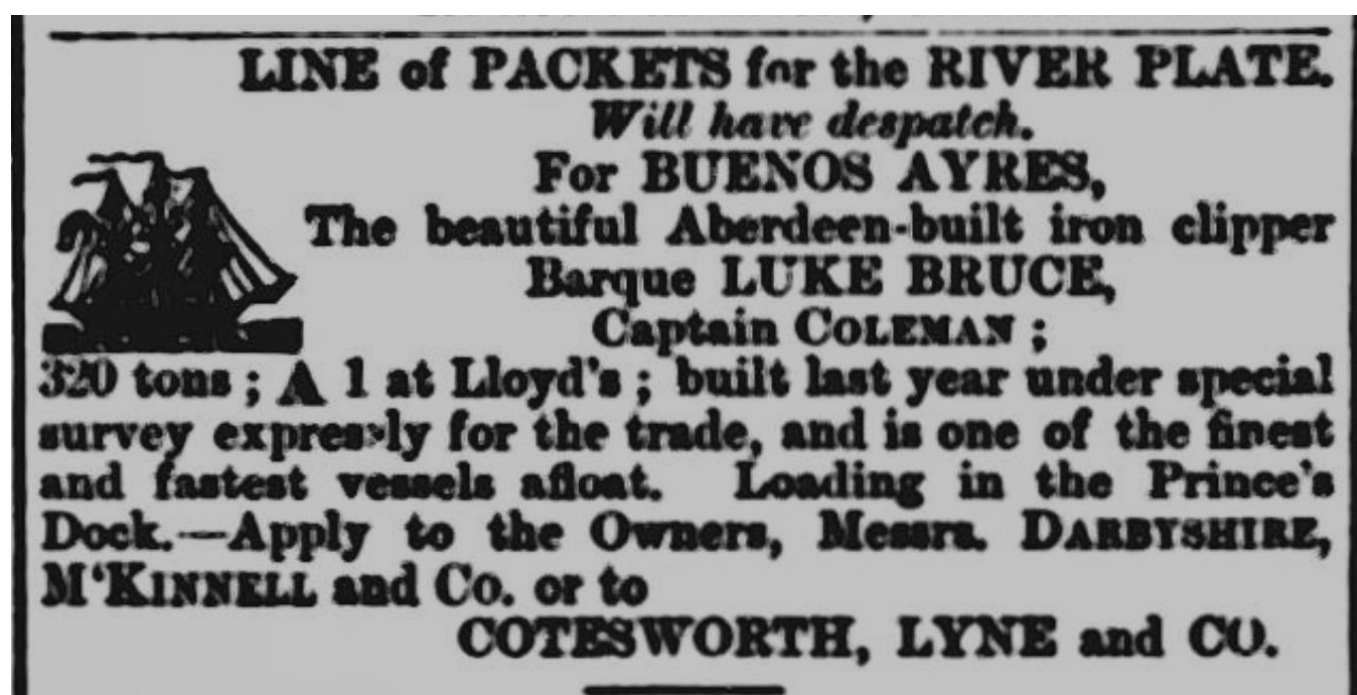
This vessel was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Buenos Ayres (Argentina), Africa, and Jamaica, West Indies.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Vessel Name(s) | Luke Bruce. |
| Yard No. | 166. |
| Rig | Barque, 3 masts, 1 deck, an Aberdeen bow, a round stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Launch Date | 26 th November 1868. |
| Owner(s) | Benjamin Darbyshire & McKinnel , Liverpool. |
| Registered Port | Liverpool. Official No.: 58942. |
| GRT | 320 tons. 310 tons net. (400 tons builder's measurement). |
| Length | 138.5 feet. (42.21m). |
| Breadth | 25.2 feet. (7.68m). |
| Depth | 14 feet. (4.27m). |
| Construction | Iron, riveted. |
| Figurehead | Not fitted. |
| Classification | Lloyds Register of Shipping Class: A1.  Built under special survey. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. LRS surveyor: William Wallis. |
| Other Information | Master - Captain James Coleman. 1875: Owned by T. Harrison & Co. Liverpool, registered at Liverpool, master Bell. By 1880: Owned by T. S. Rogerson, Liverpool. 1884, 27th November: In dense fog, about 2.15am in the screw steamer ' Durango ' (1,750 tons), Newport (Master – Thomas Lepelley), was run into by the iron barque ' Luke Bruce ,' Liverpool, (Master – Jenkins) in the English Channel and sunk. 20 crew members on the ' Durango ' were lost. ' Luke Bruce ' sustained heavy damage. 1890: T. S. Rogerson was the Managing Owner. (Merchant Navy List). 1892-96: Owned by the African Association Ltd., Liverpool and registered at Liverpool. 1897: Owned by W. C. Jarvis & Sons, Liverpool, master A. Monroe. 1897: Master Richard Tomlinson. 1899: Owned by C. P. Backstrom, Stockholm, Sweden., master C. P. Backstrom. 1907: Described as a lighter in LRS, owned by C. P. Backstrom. |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | Fate unknown |

Luke Bruce (1868). (Continued).

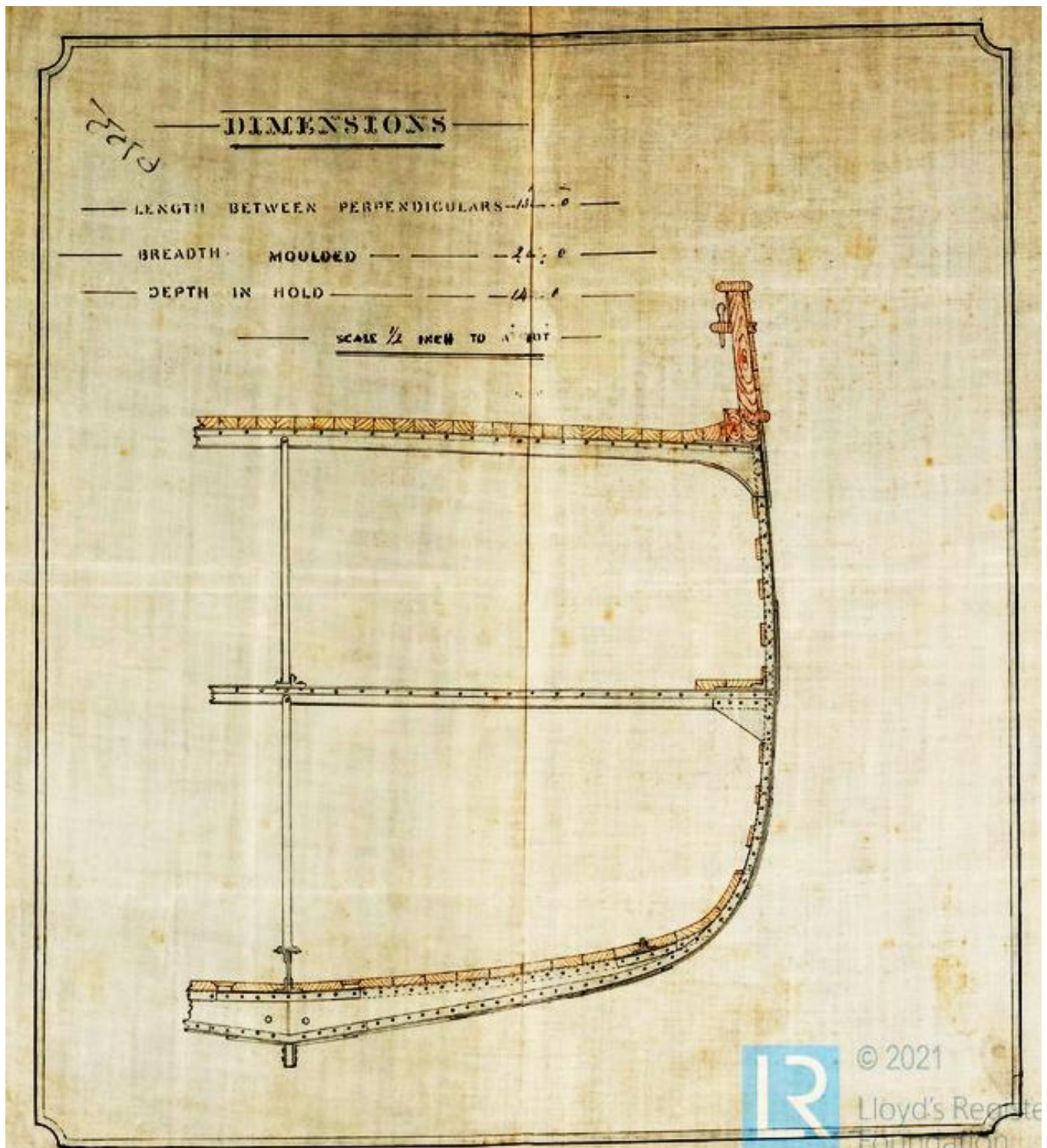
1868, 28th November: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported as follows: *"LAUNCHES. On the 26th inst. There was launched from the building-yard of Messrs. Hall, Russell and Co., at Aberdeen, an iron barque named the 'Luke Bruce', of the following dimensions: - Length, 138 feet; breadth, 25 feet; depth, 14 feet; 400 tons B.M. The 'Luke Bruce' has been built for Messrs. Darbyshire and McKinnel of Liverpool, is intended for the River Plate Trade, and will be commanded by Captain Coleman."*

The following advertisement, which was published in Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 22nd July 1869, claims that the *"...beautiful Aberdeen built iron clipper barque 'Luke Bruce'...is one of the finest and fastest vessels afloat..."*



LINE of PACKETS for the RIVER PLATE.
Will have despatch.
For BUENOS AYRES,
The beautiful Aberdeen-built iron clipper
Barque LUKE BRUCE,
Captain COLEMAN ;
320 tons ; A 1 at Lloyd's ; built last year under special
survey expressly for the trade, and is one of the finest
and fastest vessels afloat. Loading in the Prince's
Dock.—Apply to the Owners, Messrs. DARBYSHIRE,
M'KINNELL and Co. or to
COTESWORTH, LYNE and CO.

1897, 18th September: The Liverpool Mercury reported as follows: *"A Captain's Error. At the Liverpool Police Court yesterday, Richard Tomlinson, captain of the British ship 'Luke Bruce' was summoned for having failed to enter in the ship's log information of the fact that for 3 months he had a man on board sick. The vessel was on a voyage from the West Coast of Africa to Liverpool, and a steward named Wilhelm Rank came on board ill at Calabar. He was ill for 3 months and then died, the only entry in the log being that the man came on board ill and afterwards died. Mr Morton who appeared for the prosecution, said that the offence was a technical one. — A fine of 10s, with £2-12s-3d costs was imposed."*


Luke Bruce (1868). (Continued).

Half Midship section of the barque 'Luke Bruce'.
(Hall, Russell, 1868, c/o Lloyds Register Foundation).

Umvoti (1869).

She was built to carry general cargo and passengers and named after a South African River. She was well known at Aberdeen; London; Port Natal (Durban), South Africa; Zanzibar, East Africa; Port Louis, Mauritius; and Adelaide, Fremantle, Albany, Hamelin and Bunbury, Australia, and Chalmers, New Zealand.

1869, 22nd October: The Aberdeen Free Press reported as follows: *“LAUNCH. - There was launched from the building-yard of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, a handsome iron ship named the ‘**Umvoti**’, of 464 tons register, and 595 builders’ measure; length, 158.9 feet; breadth, 28.7 feet; depth, 15.9 feet. The ‘**Umvoti**’ has been built to the order of J. T. Rennie, Esq., Deemount, as another addition to his line of clippers from London to Natal, for which trade the ‘**Umvoti**’ has been specially designed, and will be commanded by Capt. Stuart, late of the ‘**Umgeni**’.”*

| Vessel Name(s) | Umvoti. |
|--|--|
| Yard Number | 167. |
| Rig | Ship, 3 masts, 2 decks, a round stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Launch Date | 19 th October 1869. |
| Owner(s) (No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets). | John T. Rennie, & Co., Aberdeen. John Thomson Rennie , shipowner (52), John Cook , shipowner (8), and Robert Abernethy , engineer (4), all Aberdeen. |
| Registered Port | Aberdeen. Official No.: 60697. |
| GRT | 464 tons. 595 tons builder's measurement. |
| Length | 158.9 feet. (48.43m). |
| Breadth | 28.7 feet. (8.75m). |
| Depth | 15.9 feet. (4.85m). |
| Construction | Iron, riveted. |
| Figurehead | Semi-female. |
| Classification | Lloyds Register of Shipping: Class A1. <div>  Built under special survey. A&CP – Anchors and Cables proved at a public machine. LRS surveyor – Thomas W. Kettle. </div> |
| Other Information | 1869: Master J. Stewart (LRS). 1872, June: Her rig was changed from a ship to a barque. 1873, 28th June: She grounded at Port Adelaide, Australia. 1879: She carried troops in the Anglo-Zulu War (Jan. / July 1879). 1891: Owned by Captain William Balfour Hay, Adelaide, South Australia. Sailed Australia / Mauritius / South Africa route. 1912: Owned by Edwin E. Mayer, Port Louis, Mauritius, and registered at Port Louis. 1912, October: Owned by Ireland, Fraser & Co. , Port Louis, Mauritius - registered at Port Louis. |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | 1928: Scrapped. |

Umvoti (1869). (Continued).**Some Interesting Press Articles.**

1872, 21st June: The Daily News, reported that '**Umvoti**' was at London and taking cargo onboard for passage to Port Natal, South Africa. The article stated *"...the high classed clipper ship '**Umvoti**' is fast filling up to sail in a few days. Her passenger accommodation is most commodious and elegant. Apply John T. Rennie, Lime Street."*

1873, 30th June: The Dundee Courier reported as follows. *"ABERDEEN. THE '**UMVOTI**'. The barque '**Umvoti**', of this port, Captain Miles, arrived at Mauritius, 9th May, from Sumba (Timor), with ponies. The captain reports having experienced a cyclone, April 17, when in lat. 15.40 S, long. 111.35 E., the wind veering from N.W. to N.N.E., E., and S.S.E., and blowing with such force that the foresail, upper and lower foretopsails, and foretopgallantsail, had to be cut away for the safety of the ship. The bad weather lasted five hours, during which time 54 ponies died. This vessel has been refitted, and left for Australia on the 23rd May with a part cargo of sugar."*

1873, 20th October: Lloyd's List reported as follows: *"The '**UMVOTI**', Miles from Adelaide to London, with flour and wheat, which put in here, 24th Aug., had experienced a succession of heavy gales throughout her passage; she shipped seas on several occasions, once having the tarpaulings of the hatches washed off, when a great quantity of water found its way down the hold, damaging the cargo. 1,157 bags of wheat and flour had to be sold, and the rest of the cargo was reshipped. The vessel sails today."*

1892, 4th February: The Hobart Mercury reported as follows: *"SMALL-POX OUTBREAK. Two more cases of small-pox have broken out among the crew of the barque '**Umvoti**' from Mauritius, at present at quarantine at Port Chalmers. "The Barque '**Umvoti**', from Mauritius, was reported from the heads early yesterday morning, says the Otago Daily Times of the 20th inst., when the tug '**Plucky**' proceeded down to tender her, and on getting close to the vessel it was ascertained there was sickness. The tow line was thrown on board, and the vessel was towed inside the heads, Pilot Paton remaining on board the tug directing the vessel's movements. On reaching the quarantine ground she came to anchor when the Customs boat proceeded off with Dr Drysdale (Health Officer) and Captain Gray (Customs Surveyor), stopping just within speaking distance of the vessel. The captain reported that early in December one of the crew (natives) fell sick, and shortly developed a rash which looked like small-. Everything possible was done for the man, who is now convalescent; but Dr Drysdale, having examined him, states that he has unmistakably had a severe attack of smallpox. The seaman who was attending the man sickened meantime, and died shortly after the vessel was towed inside the heads. The health officer accordingly quarantined the vessel, and the yellow flag was at once hoisted, and the officials returned on shore. The '**Umvoti**' is an iron barque of 442 tons, and is commanded by Captain Hay. We are indebted to the courtesy of Mr Chamberlain, Collector of Customs, for the following information: - The Captain and officers will remain on board the vessel and thoroughly fumigate and*

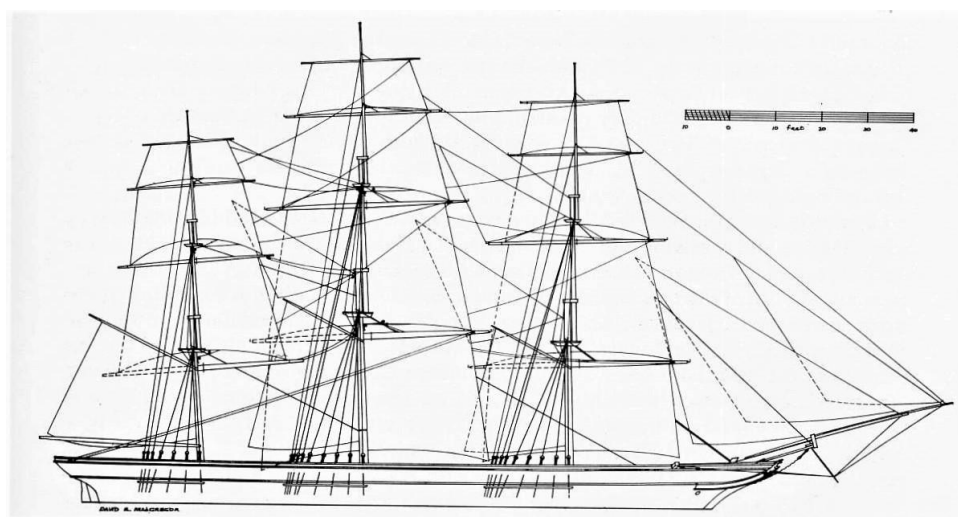
disinfect her; the captain's wife will also remain on board. The crew were sent to the Quarantine Island yesterday afternoon, and the body of the deceased seaman was also taken there for burial. Should no fresh case of the disease break out pratique will be granted to the vessel at the end of 16 days. The 'Umvoti left Mauritius on December 10, and made a passage of 40 days from port to port.'

Inverness (1869).

She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Hartlepool, London, Cork, India, Hawkes Bay and Napier, New Zealand, and Buenos Ayres.



'Inverness' rigged as a barque. (Courtesy State Library of Victoria Ref H99.220/1552).



Rigging of the 'Inverness' by David M. McGregor.

1869, 15th September: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on her launch as follows: *"LAUNCH OF A COMPOSITE VESSEL. – About four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, a splendid composite vessel was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Messrs Hall, Russell and Co. On moving off, she was named the 'Inverness', and took to the water in fine style.*

Inverness (1869). (Continued).

The 'Inverness' is 180 feet in length, 32 feet breadth of beam, 19 feet depth of hold, and is of 775 tons burden. She is intended for the Madras trade, and is classed A1 at Lloyds for seventeen years. The 'Inverness' is to be commanded by Captain Donkin. She is the third vessel launched from the Aberdeen yards during the past week, and all of very high class. Immediately on being launched she was towed up to the shear poles, where the work of masting has commenced."

| | |
|--|--|
| Vessel Name(s) | Inverness. |
| Yard Number | 168. |
| Rig | Ship, 3 masts, 2 decks, a round stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Launch Date | 11 th September 1869. |
| Owner(s) (No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets). | John & Robert Grant, London. |
| Registered Port | London. Official No.: 63519. |
| GRT | 742 tons. (775 tons burden). |
| Length | 180 feet. (54.86m). |
| Breadth | 32 feet. (9.75m). |
| Depth | 19 feet. (5.79m). |
| Construction | Composite. |
| Figurehead | Billethead. |
| Classification | Lloyds Register of Shipping: Class 17A1. |
| Other Information | <p>1870 to 1874: Master Captain Donkin.</p> <p>1875, 21 August: Departed from London, Captain Courtney, Surgeon Superintendent James Frood, 99 days later she arrived at Hawkes Bay, New Zealand (28 Nov. 1875) landing 105 immigrants, there was one birth and one death during the passage.</p> <p>1876, 21 July: Departed from London, arrived at Napier, New Zealand (29 Oct. 1876).</p> <p>1879: Owned by Richardson Brothers (J. C. and G. S. Richardson), Swansea and registered at Swansea, Wales.</p> <p>By 1888: Her rig was changed to that of a barque.</p> <p>1896, August: Owned by the Amazon Submarine Telegraph Company. After her purchase she was loaded with a store of cable at London and sailed for the River Amazon.</p> |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | <p>1896, 20th December: On passage from London to Para (master John Bunny) carrying telegraph cable, coal and general cargo she stranded on Japarica Bank between Caete and Salinas, Brazil - Near the mouth of River Amazon. All crew were saved by the Norwegian barque 'Victoria' and landed at Para. (1st mate – William H. Beach, 2nd Mate J. J. Fairweather). Although the vessel had broken up, Captain Bunny believed the cargo of cable could be drawn out, but failing this nothing could be saved.</p> |

Wen Yu Maru (1869).

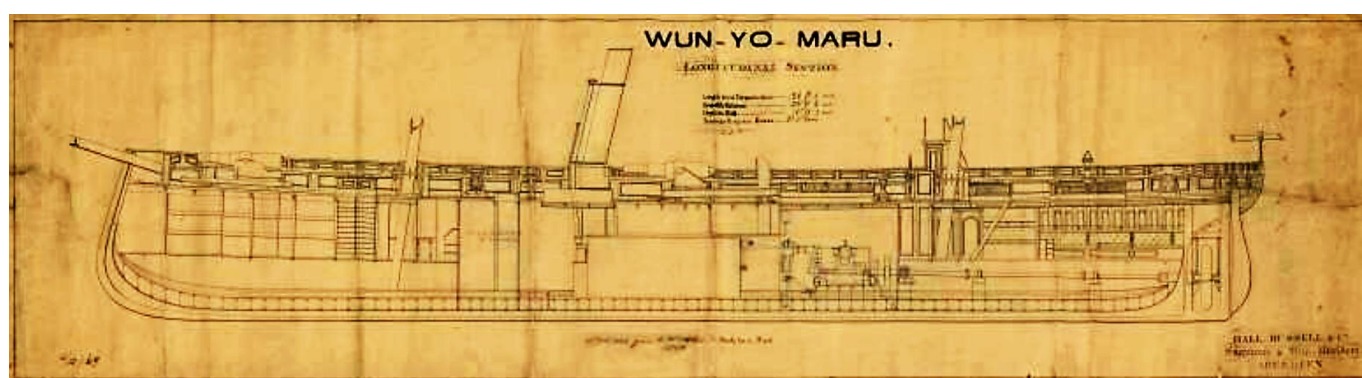
She was a gunboat, built under contract to the Glover Brothers intended for the newly formed Imperial Japanese Navy, referred to as the **Un'yō** in Japan.

1869, 8th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“LAUNCH OF A JAPANESE GUNBOAT. – There was launched on Thursday, from the building-yard of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, a composite screw gunboat, called the ‘**Wen-yu-Maru**’, of 360 tons and 80 horse-power, and carrying four guns of large calibre. The dimensions of the vessel are – length, 130 ft.; breadth, 25 ft.; depth of hold, 10 ft. 6 in. The ‘**Wen-yu-Maru**’ is very strongly constructed on the composite principle, and is expected to prove a very fast and powerful gunboat. The guns are – one 10-pounder, one 40-pounder, and two 20-pounders. This vessel is intended for the Japanese Government, and has been contracted for through Messrs Glover Brothers. The ‘**Wen-yu-Maru**’ will be commanded by Captain Gibson, whose lady gracefully performed the ceremony of naming the vessel.”*

| Vessel Name(s) | Wun-Yo-Maru, Wen Yu Maru or Un'yō .. (Rising Cloud). |
|----------------------|--|
| Yard Number | 169. |
| Rig | Brig rig, 2 masts, 1 deck, a round stern, and a standing bowsprit. |
| Engines | Steam, 2 engines, direct acting, horiz., 80 HP, by Hall, Russell & Co. |
| Launch Date | 2 nd December 1869. |
| Owner(s) | Glover Brothers , Marischal Street, Aberdeen, (designated for the Japanese Navy). |
| Registered Port | Aberdeen. Official No.: n/a. |
| GRT | 360 tons. |
| Length | 130 feet. (39.62m). |
| Breadth | 25 feet. (7.62m). |
| Depth | 10 feet, 6 inches. (3.20m). |
| Construction | Composite. |
| Figurehead | Not fitted. |
| Classification | Unknown. |
| Other Information | <p>1870, 5th March: She left Aberdeen bound for Japan, master Gibson.</p> <p>1874: She was dispatched to Kyūshū during the Saga Rebellion.</p> <p>1875, May: She carried diplomats to Busan in Korea in an effort by the Japanese government to open diplomatic relations with Korea.</p> <p>1875, September: She was dispatched in a military response, in what was later termed the Ganghwa Island incident. This and the following blockade eventually led to the Treaty of Ganghwa, which opened the Korean Peninsula to Japanese trade.</p> <p>1876: She was assigned to assist in the suppression of the Hagi Rebellion, another uprising of disaffected former samurai.</p> |
| Date Scrapped / Lost | <p>1876, 1st November: She stranded at Atawa-mura, on the coast of the Kii Peninsula, Japan. 23 crew members were lost. <i>See press report below.</i></p> <p>She was severely damaged and scrapped the following year.</p> |

Wen Yu Maru (1869). (Continued).

1877, 16th January: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported as follows: *“WRECK OF A JAPANESE GUNBOAT. The Japan Gazette confirms the news of the wreck of the gunboat ‘Unyo-kuan’. During very heavy weather, she tried to make the harbour of Kutsu-ura, but was too far to leeward, and was driven towards the island of O-oshima, at the entrance to the Ki-i Channel. When about 26 miles northward of that island, and when under only two reefed topsails and a reefed foresail, her rudder was carried away, and she was borne by the wind and sea towards the coast of Nippon, where she was thrown ashore at a spot known as Atawa-mura. Here she now lies beam on to the sea, embedded in loose shingle only 50 feet from the shore. Eight officers and 15 of the crew were washed overboard and drowned.”*



Profile of the ‘Wun-Yo-Maru’ 1869. (Hall Russell).

Acknowledgements.

Thanks to Ian Whittaker for assistance in getting this volume completed.

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www.clydeships.co.uk

Information on >40,000 Scottish built ships.

Appendix A.

John Couper - Hall's to Hong Kong.

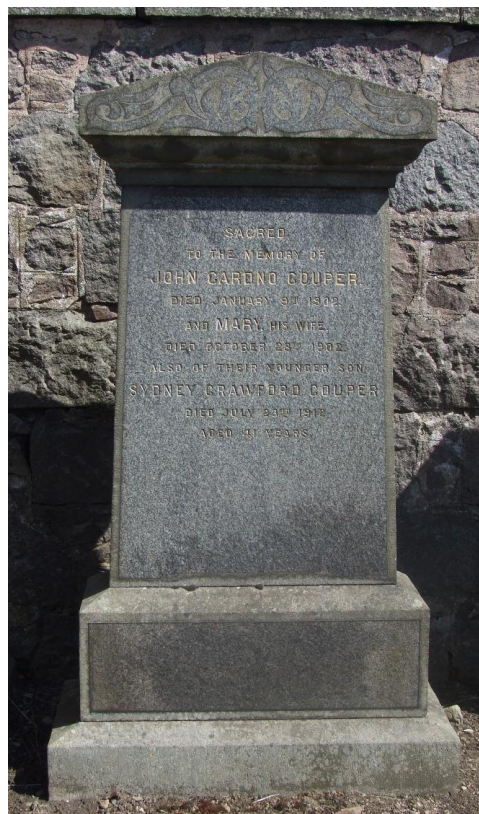
Aberdeen Evening Express - Monday 8th October 1984.

*"I was most interested in Part Two of Sheila Hamilton's articles on **Hall Russell**, she refers to **John Cooper** as one of the four men who formed it. This was **John Cardno Couper**, my late husband's great uncle. He was born in 1818 and was, as a youth, apprenticed to **Alex. Hall Co.** When finished his apprenticeship, he went with his father to Hong Kong where they built up an extensive shipbuilding and repairing business and introduced a dry dock on the site on which now stands the Aberdeen Dock. He also had a shipbuilding and repairing yard at Whampoa on the Pearl River near Canton. In 1856, **John's** father was kidnapped by pirates and never heard of again. The Chinese Government compensated the family handsomely. **John Couper** returned to this country soon after his father's disappearance and in the 1860's bought Craigiebuckler Estate. He gave land for the building of Craigiebuckler Church and subscribed handsomely towards its erection. The family continued to live at Craigiebuckler until the early thirties when the house was sold to the Macaulay Institute. I hope this will be of interest. **John Couper** was a leading businessman in Aberdeen until his retirement. Jean F. Grant, 51 North Deeside Road, Aberdeen."*

The Chinese government compensation is said to have been \$210,000. At this period £1 equalled approx. \$5, therefore £42,000, approx. £4 million in 2025.

John Couper senior was sent to Whampoa (aka Huangpu) by the Peninsula and Oriental Company (P&O) in 1845 to build a new dockyard for shipbuilding and ship-repair, after the previous mud docks were damaged during the Battle of Whampoa during the First Opium War (1839 to 1842). The new dockyard was destroyed during the Second Opium War (1856 to 1860), however by 1861 **John Cardno Couper** had rebuilt it. In 1863, he sold the dockyard to a new company registered in Hong Kong called the Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Company Limited owned by Aberdonian Thomas Sutherland and Douglas Laipraik born in London to Scottish parents.

John Cardno Couper is buried in the Allenvale Cemetery, Aberdeen, with his wife Mary. He died 9th January 1902, and Mary died 28th October 1902.



Appendix B

SUDDEN DEATH OF MR JAMES HALL, SHIPBUILDER.

Peterhead Sentinel and General Advertiser for Buchan District - 4th June 1869.

*“Mr James Hall, of the eminent firm of **Messrs Alex, Hall & Sons**, Footdee, died suddenly on Saturday morning. Deceased had gone to help to subdue a fire that had broken out in a timber yard on the south side of Provost Blaikie’s Quay, near where the Japanese Warship is lying, and through over exertion, brought on a crisis of heart disease, which instantly proved fatal. **Mr Hall** was sixty-five years of age on the 18th of last month. His father, **Mr Alexander Hall**, came from the parish of Auchterless, and in early life had commenced business on his own account as a shipbuilder some eighty years ago, in the premises still occupied by his sons. His two sons, **James and William**, became partners in the firm ultimately. When the elder **Mr Hall** commenced business, the building of merchant ships had not then been reduced to a science, and the tonnage rules of measurement then enforced retarded improvements. The old class of merchant vessels were made to carry cargoes, and but little attention paid to sailing properties. To obtain a more important desideratum (a higher rate of speed) the **Messrs Hall** about thirty years ago introduced the improvement of “the clipper bow”, at the same time adding considerably to the length of the vessels which they built, which improvements soon gained a name for the enterprising builders, and Aberdeen clippers were soon known far and wide. The ‘**Scottish Maid**’ was the first vessel constructed after the improved plan. Other improvements have from time to time been made by the firm, and others adopted, in the building of merchant vessels. **Mr Hall, sen.** died about the year 1850 (1849), at the ripe age of ninety years, and since then the business has been wholly conducted by **Messrs James and William Hall**, who were also partners in the firm of **Hall, Russell & Co.** Their reputation as shipbuilders has always been of the highest kind. They were the first to build vessels on the composite principle. Their first great triumph was the building of the ‘**Schomberg**’ a ship of 2600 tons. Since then they have built several large and handsome vessels, and besides, a number of iron vessels and steamers. As a thorough businessman, **Mr Hall** has left few in Aberdeen to equal him. As an employer of labour, his reputation has been quite as high as that which he achieved in shipbuilding. His firm always paid the highest rate of wages; and only a short time since they raised the same without solicitation – at all times taking an active interest in promoting every movement having a tendency to advance the welfare of the working classes. They opened evening schools for their own apprentices, and at them **James Hall** frequently taught the classes himself. His liberality in seeing that “Jack should be as good as his master”, as he himself expressed it at the launch of the Japanese warship, a few weeks ago, was a lesson that masters might well imitate. **Mr Hall**, with all his opportunities to do so, never pushed himself much before the public, but seemed rather to be contented when he could do “good by stealth”. **Mr Hall** was a widower, his wife having died some two or three years ago. It may be mentioned that arrangements were made several years ago whereby the business could be carried on uninterruptedly should such an*

*event as the one now deplored occur. Work in the building-yards, and in **Hall, Russell & Co.'s** engine works, was suspended on Saturday, but was resumed on Monday morning. **Mr Hall's** remains were interred on Thursday, in the churchyard of Macduff, beside those of his wife."*

Appendix C

MR JAMES HALL'S FUNERAL.

Aberdeen Press and Journal – Wednesday 9th June 1869.

*"On Thursday morning, the mortal remains of **Mr James Hall, shipbuilder**, were removed from his house, Footdee, at half-past six o'clock, for interment at the Churchyard of Macduff. The body was carried to the General Station by six apprentices of the firm of which deceased was senior partner, there being a second shift of six apprentices to relieve the first in their progress to the station, from which it was taken by the 7 A.M. train, on its way to the place of interment. Notwithstanding the early hour at which the funeral cortege left deceased's house, there was a large assemblage of spectators waiting to see the coffin taken from the house, a great number of whom followed the procession, which was large. The works of the firm, and of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, were laid off till breakfast time, the men beginning at ten o'clock."*



The inscription reads:

TO THE MEMORY OF
CHRISTINA WILSON
DAUGHTER OF
JAMES WILSON
SHIP MASTER MACDUFF
AND THE FAITHFUL WIFE OF
JAMES HALL
SHIP BUILDER ABERDEEN
MARRIED 11TH SEPT 1828
DIED 10TH SEPT 1866
AGED 58 YEARS
AND THE SAID
JAMES HALL
WHO DIED 29TH MAY 1869
AGED 65 YEARS.

*Grave of **James Hall**, Macduff Churchyard. (S. Bruce).*

Appendix D

Thomson, Hall, Catto & Co., Footdee.

1856, 17th May: The Preston Chronicle reported as follows: *“DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT ABERDEEN. – About two o’clock on Friday morning, a fire broke out in the large engineering and boiler-making establishment of **Thomson, Hall, Catto, and Co.**, Footdee, which proved so destructive, that in less than an hour, from £10,000 to £12,000 worth of property, machinery, and tools, were rendered quite useless.”* (Approx. £940,000 to £1.127 million in 2025).

1862, 17th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported a long list of subscribers to the Distress in Lancashire fund, including the following Aberdeen shipbuilders:

Approx. £ in 2025

| | | |
|--|-------------|------|
| Walter Hood | £5. | £530 |
| Workmen at Thomson, Catto, Buchanan & Co. (5 departments) | £4, 3d. | £425 |
| Workmen at Walter Hood & Co., Blacksmiths | £1, 11s. | £117 |
| Workmen at Walter Hood & Co., Shipbuilders | £2, 12s 5d. | £275 |
| Workmen at William Duthie, Shipbuilders | 4s, 6½d. | £24 |
| Workmen at Blaikie Brothers, Moulders, | 15s, 3d. | £80 |
| Workmen at Blaikie Brothers, Engine Shop, | 9s, 8d. | £52 |
| Workmen at Blaikie Brothers, Boilermakers | 14s, 4d. | £75 |
| Workmen at Aberdeen Rope & Sail Co., | 4s, 4d. | £22 |

Appendix E

George Thomson.

1863, 9th October: The Elgin Courier reported as follows: *“EXTENSIVE DEFALCATIONS AND ALLEGED FORGERY ABERDEEN. In the face of official hand-bills now broad-cast over the three kingdoms, intimating that a gentleman hitherto holding an influential position in Aberdeen 'is wanted' by the police there, 'on several charges of forgery to a large amount,' it were needless for us to avoid giving shape to the unwelcome tidings which piecemeal have reached during the past four days. Most our readers who have had any dealings in Aberdeen must have heard the old-established and respectable Rope and Sail Manufactory, and the Iron Shipbuilding and Engineering Works at Footdee, associated with the name of Thomson. We regret very much to say that the gentleman for whom the police of his native city are now in search, Mr George Thomson, the principal of both the firms named. We believe has been privately known for sometime back that Mr Thomson was speculating largely stock, new ventures, and loans; but that he had resorted to the means now alleged to meet his payments and cover his losses was never for a moment conceived. For he held a most respectable position in society. The establishments of which he was head employed a very large number of workmen. They were fully employed, and were understood to be yielding handsome returns for the capital invested. As active businessman of integrity and means, so highly did he stand the estimation of his fellow-citizens that, some five years ago, he was unanimously elected to the important office Deau of Guild, the duties of which discharged for two years ably and faithfully. On Wednesday week, Mr Thomson transacted business in Aberdeen, that same afternoon he was" spoken to at the Perth Railway station, but since then he has been missing. It was on Thursday that the unfortunate state in which he had left matters first became current talk the town, and while some of the stories circulated then and since regarding the amount of his shortcomings bore absurdity their face, yet £70,000, including several forgeries for heavy sums, according to the handbill above referred to, will barely, it generally said, cover the losses. A large proportion of this, it is feared, will fall upon several of the eminent Aberdeen shipbuilding firms. On Friday evening the gentleman who acted as manager of the Rope and Sail Manufactory was arrested and lodged in prison, on the suspicion, we understand, of being concerned some way in Mr Thomson's defalcations. Naturally the matter has created much excitement in Aberdeen, and while it would be idle to say that public feeling is not expressed strongly against the speculator, yet we should be guilty of reticence if we did not add that not little sympathy felt for the man. For George Thomson was a frank kindly hearted friend, and never slow to say a good word for, or lend a helping hand to, anyone pushing upwards. — Banffshire Journal.”*

1863, 25th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“We understand two meetings were held last week of the creditors on the estate of George Thomson, when Mr George Milne, Banker, and Mr James Collie, Advocate, were elected trustee, and trustee in succession, upon the estate. Claims to the amount of upwards of*

\$43,000 were represented at the meeting. The commissioners are Mr James Westland, North of Scotland Bank; Mr George Collie, Advocate; and Mr James Williamson, merchant, all in Aberdeen."

1863, 24th January: The Aberdeen People's Journal reported that Mr George Thomson had purchased two whaling vessels from the Aberdeen Artic Company. The two vessels; '**Alibi**' (238 tons) and the brig '**Sophia**' (113 tons) were both bought for £3,400.

Appendix F

Contract of Apprenticeship.

Sheriff Court, Aberdeen – Hall, Russell, & Co. v. Alexander.

1869, 9th July: The Aberdeen Free Press, 9th July 1869.

"This was an action to enforce payment of a penalty on the Defender's Indenture with the Pursuers' predecessors. The penalty was sought upon the ground of the Defender having, as alleged, broke his Indenture. Various preliminary defences were stated but repelled. The defence, on the merits, will be found from the following judgement pronounced by Sheriff Thomson: -

*Aberdeen, 2nd July, 1869. Having resumed consideration of the cause, finds, as matter of fact, that the defender (apprentice) entered into an Indenture with **Thomson, Catto, Buchanan, & Co.**, from 7th December, 1861, for seven years, whereby the said employers bound themselves and their assignees to teach, or cause the said apprentice to be sufficiently taught and instructed in the trade or art of a **millwright** and **engineer**, in so far as carried on by them, or the said apprentice is capable to conceive, or ready and willing to learn the same." That the said Indenture was assigned by the said employers to the Pursuers as at 29th September, 1864: That the apprentice continued in the Pursuers' service till 9th April, 1868, when he left it, without the consent of the Pursuers: That the Indenture did not expire till 7th December, 1868: That the departments of the Pursuers' work consist of pattern making, iron-turning, engine-fitting and finishing: That the Defender was not allowed, while he was in his employers' service, to engage in any department of the work except turning, and that he got no instruction in the other branches of the business: That he had attained sufficient proficiency in turning to have warranted his removal to the fitting department: That he, and his father on his behalf, repeatedly during the two years preceding his leaving the Pursuers' service requested that he might be so removed: Finds, that it is not proved that his removal, in conformity with his said request, would have been incompatible with the arrangements of the Pursuers' business: Finds, that these requests were always refused, and, latterly, upon the ground that the Pursuers' Manager was the sole and absolute judge of the time when the Defender was to get a shift, that the Defender intimated his intention to leave on account of the Pursuers' giving him no opportunity for instruction in any department of the business other than that of turning: That the day after*

*he requested the Pursuers' to give him up his Indenture: That it was barely, if at all, possible for the Defender to have acquired instruction in engine-fitting during the part of his apprenticeship which was still to run at the date of his leaving: Finds, as matter of law, that in the whole circumstances the Pursuers' so violated the obligation incumbent on them to instruct the Defender in the trade or art of a **millwright** and **engineer** as to entitle the Defender to be free from his Indenture: Therefore, assoilzies the Defender from the conclusions of the libel: Finds the Defender entitled to expenses. (Signed) John Comrie Thomson.*

*Note. – The question raised by this case involves a point of extreme delicacy in the law of master and apprentice. On the one hand, it is clear, that it must, to a very great extent, be left to the discretion of the master to say at what time an apprentice is to be shifted from one branch of a business to another. In a certain sense, indeed, that must be left to the master's discretion entirely. On the other hand, effect must be given to the obligation in the Indenture that the apprentice shall have had sufficient opportunity for learning as much of the business as ought, if he takes advantage of it, to turn him out an "**engineer** and **millwright**," or whatever may be the trade to which he is bound. In the present case the apprentice had been kept for six years and three months of a seven years' apprenticeship at the single department of turning, and, even when he left, no promise or assurance was given to him that he would get a shift. That he was proficient in turning is plain from the whole evidence of those who saw his work, and also from the fact that he was employed on the best jobs. In the circumstances which are set forth in the findings of fact in the preceding Interlocutor, the Sheriff-Substitute is of opinion that there was a failure on the part of the Pursuers to fulfil the obligation to teach the Defender in terms of their covenant with him. There is evidence to show that it is becoming more and more the custom in such works as the Pursuers' to keep apprentices to one branch of the business, and it was stated at the Bar that in the large engineering works in the South that custom has become almost universal. The change may be a salutary one for all concerned, but custom of trade is not pleaded, and the Court has here to deal solely with the express provisions of a written contract.*

For Pursuer – Lachlan McKinnon, junior, Advocate.

For Defender – Charles Duncan, Advocate."

I found this interesting for several reasons:

- a) It mentions a written contact or indenture; I never saw such a written document when I served my apprenticeship from 1980 to 1984.
- b) The apprenticeship period was seven years. We only served four years in the 1980's.
- c) My apprenticeship was that of a '**Ship Draughtsman**' nothing else, never spent any time in any other department during my apprenticeship.
- d) Penalty for breaking your apprenticeship.

Appendix G

Launch of a War Ship for the Government of Japan.

Aberdeen Press and Journal 31st March 1869.

*“Of late there have been apprehensions that the name of Aberdeen as a shipbuilding port was losing its high prestige. No one can doubt that, had our enterprising shipbuilders possessed the same facilities and appliances as other shipbuilding ports, such a charge could never have had a foundation. Other places, such as the Clyde, have, from the advantage of a near proximity to the iron mines, grown in shipbuilding, with the growth of the demand for vessels constructed of that material. And it is not unlikely, we think, that Aberdeen, provided with better appliances may compete with the Clyde, even in the production of iron vessels. The cheaper cost of living in Aberdeen as compared with Glasgow, will always enable our shipbuilders to command labour at such a rate as will compensate them for the additional expense of material. The improvements of the Harbour, when carried out, cannot fail to be of immense advantage to the shipbuilders, and to prove a stimulus to shipbuilding; but until these improvements are crowned by at least one graving dock, they cannot be complete. And the fact that the magnificent warship, which was successfully launched from the yard of **Messrs Hall, Russell, & Company**, would, in the event of any accident occurring to her in launching, have required to be sent to Leith or London, or some other southern port, to be repaired, strongly testifies to what we allege. The vessel launched on Saturday is to all intents and purposes a steam ram, although in this particular, from the nature of the vessels she will have to deal with, her calibre is not so great as that of our English rams. Her keel was laid down in August, 1868, to the order of Messrs Glover & Co., Japan, for whom Messrs Glover Brothers, Aberdeen, are agents, and who have thereby been the means of bringing to the town an amount of employment for the industrious, the extent of which may be gathered from the contract price of this vessel, which, we believe, is between £60,000 and £70,000 – **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** having to fit her out, complete. Mr Charles T. Glover was for some time resident in Japan, and a member of the family is still located there. According to the specifications, the vessel is equal to a British warship of her class; and we believe she is very similar in every respect to the ‘Druid’, recently launched at Deptford, and christened by the Princess Louise. She is built of British oak and teak-wood, the upper deck being laid on iron diagonals for the sake of lightness. Her length is 210 feet (keel), breadth of beam 38 feet, and her depth at main deck, 21 feet, and at spar deck, which covers the battery, 29 feet. By register measure, she is 1,500 tons, and she will have water-tight compartments on the lower deck at stem and stern; the engines are 250 horse-power nominal, and are manufactured by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** They are on the self-acting principle, and the screw propeller, which is of brass, may be lifted or lowered as occasion requires. The vessel will be full rigged, and will*

sail under canvas, or steam, or both. The boilers will be tubular, and of the newest construction. These also have been made by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** The armour plating is the only part of the vessel which **Hall, Russell & Co.** do not manufacture, this having been procured at the Mersey Iron Works. The plating consists of 4½ inch iron, forming a belt five feet deep round the vessel. This substantial shield forms an overcoat to six inches of teak wood. She is, as we have said, provided with her bow ram, faced with stamped plate brass, about 7 inches thick from keel to knight-heads. Her lower masts and yards are made of iron, all the other spars being made of wood; and she is provided with a running-in bowsprit, similar to ships of like construction in the Navy, to enable her to make use of her ram in cutting down ships. One most valuable and novel part of the equipment is that her largest boat is to be propelled by a high pressure steam engine, thus doing away, so far as that boat is concerned, with the necessity of the laborious work of rowing. She is to have two six-pounder guns, on her upper deck (Whitworths), to be used at the bow of the vessel, or taken on shore, and used as field-pieces, if occasion should require. Of her ten large guns, eight are to be shunt rifled 64-pounders, and the other two 110-pounders, rifled Armstrong muzzle-loaders. The two heavier guns are intended to be worked at the bow and at the stern, the ports being so constructed as to admit of their being discharged in any line. The contract for the guns has been secured by the London Ordnance Company. The officers' quarters will be in the afterpart of the main or fighting deck, arrangements having been made for the saloon being cleared during an action, and a passage being made to it for one of the 110-pounders. Her complement of hands, when ready for sea, will be 300 officers and men; and she is expected to be ready to sail direct from Aberdeen to Japan, under steam and canvas, two months hence. The launch of the vessel took place on Saturday shortly after noon, in presence of a large number of spectators. As she glided off the stocks she was gracefully named, with the usual ceremony, by Mrs Charles T. Glover, the "Jho Sho Maru", or Whirlwind. The preparations for the launch completed under the superintendence of Mr Main, of **Messrs Alex. Hall & Co.** The 'Jho Sho Maru' will be commanded by Captain James, with Lieutenant Ingleback as chief officer. We understand that Messrs Glover have secured an order for another gunboat, similar to the 'Ho Sho Maru', built for the Japanese Government sometime ago by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, and which has given the greatest satisfaction. It is not amiss here to say that, according to the Nagasaki Times of 23rd January, the patent slip made by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, and sent out with the 'Helen Black', a barque specially built by **Messrs A. Hall & Co.** for taking it out there, has been successfully constructed under the superintendence of Mr Blaikie, a manager in the employment of **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.** The Nagasaki Times says: - "The site for the slip has been well chosen, and looks expressly designed by nature for the purpose. A great portion of the ways are on the solid rock, it being necessary to pile only about 150 feet of the deepest portion. They are warranted to support a vessel of 1,200 tons, which we think will be quite sufficient for the requirements of that port. The whole of the plant and machinery, together with the vessels to bring it out, was made by **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**, of Aberdeen; and it will, doubtless, be gratifying to that well known firm

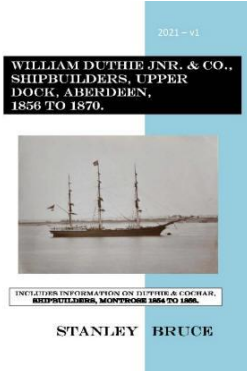
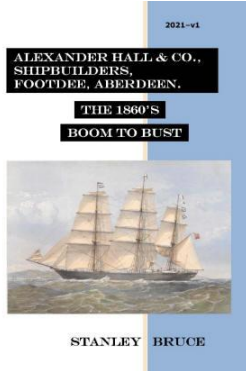
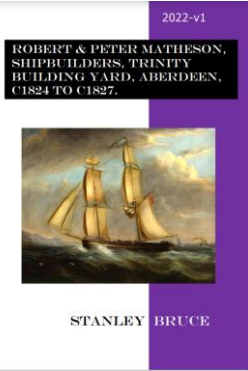
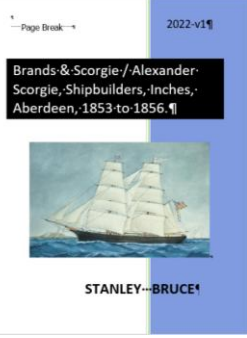

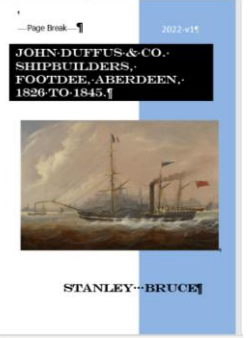
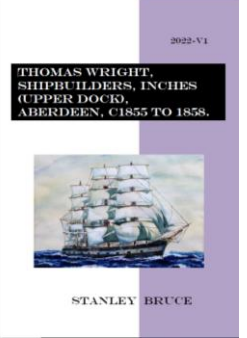
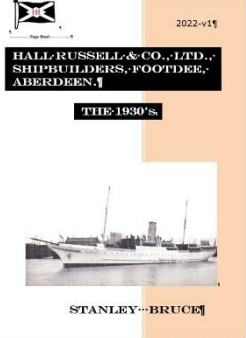
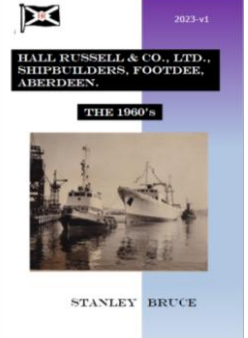
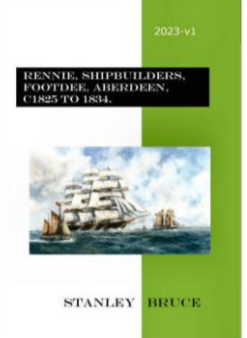
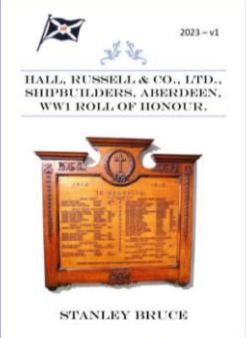
*to hear of the unqualified success of the undertaking.” After the launch, on Saturday, the **Messrs Hall** entertained a large party of ladies and gentlemen to cake and wine. **Mr Wm. Hall Jun.**, occupied the chair. The usual loyal and patriotic toasts having been given, “Success to the ‘**Jho-Sho-Maru**” was proposed, coupled with the name of Captain James, who suitably responded. **Mr James Hall** then proposed, in eulogistic terms, “The health of Mr Charles T. Glover.” Mr Glover, in the course of his response, said he felt obliged for the complimentary way in which Mr Hall had referred to his name. He (Mr Glover) was a man engaged in business, and had never yet refused an order when he had thought it to his advantage to take it. (Applause). But whilst it was true that he looked on orders from a business point of view, he believed he could say with truth, that he took such an interest in Aberdeen, that he would bring every order to it that he had in his power. (Applause). The orders he had already been the means of bringing in his direction, had given such satisfaction, that he believed it was to the interest of those for whom the orders were executed to have been brought here. (Applause). Various other toasts were then given, chief among which were, “Mrs Charles T. Glover”, replied to by Mr C. T. Glover; “The **Messrs Hall, Russell & Co.**”, responded to by **Mr Russell**; “The Workmen of **Messrs Hall & Co.**”, replied to in a neat speech by **Mr Frank Lucy**; and “The Ladies”, responded by Lieutenant Ingleback, after which the company broke up.”*

Other Titles.

A total of 2,281 pages of Aberdeen shipbuilding history is available online to date:

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Aberdeen Concrete Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., Torry, Aberdeen, 1918 to 1920 (2018), 31 pages.</p> <p>Walter Hood & Co., Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1839 to 1881 (2018), 220 pages.</p> <p>LESLIE: Ship-owners, Shipmasters, & Shipbuilders of Aberdeen (An Introduction) (2018), 150 pages.</p> | <p>2018 – v1</p> <p>ABERDEEN CONCRETE SHIPBUILDING CO., LTD., TORRY, ABERDEEN, 1918 TO 1920.</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> | <p>2021 – v2</p> <p>WALTER HOOD & CO., SHIPBUILDERS, YORK STREET, FOOTDEE, ABERDEEN, 1839 TO 1881.</p>  <p>CELEBRATING THE 150-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAUNCH OF THE THERMOPYLAR.</p> <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> | <p>2018-v1</p> <p>LESLIE: Ship-owners, Shipmasters, and Shipbuilders of Aberdeen, An Introduction.</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> |
| <p>John Smith & Co., Shipbuilders, Upper Dock, Aberdeen, c1862 to 1867 (2019), 47 pages.</p> <p>SS Intaba Built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910 (2019), 70 pages.</p> <p>Rifleman, 3-Masted Sailing Ship, Built in Aberdeen, 1860. (2019), 38 pages. <i>(Includes information on the unsolved Great Coram Street Murder of 1872).</i></p> | <p>2019-v1</p> <p>JOHN SMITH & CO., SHIPBUILDERS, UPPER DOCK, ABERDEEN, C1862 TO 1867.</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> | <p>2019-v1</p> <p>SS INTABA, BUILT BY HALL, RUSSELL & CO., LTD, YORK PLACE, FOOTDEE, ABERDEEN, 1910.</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> | <p>2019-v1</p> <p>RIFLEMAN, 3-Masted Sailing Ship, built in Aberdeen, 1860.</p> <p>MURDERER ON BOARD</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> |
| <p>Hall Russell Remembered, Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992, (2007), 36-pages.</p> <p>William Stephen & Co. / William Stephen & Sons, / Alexander Stephen & Sons, Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1793 to 1830, (2019), 75 pages.</p> <p>David Burns & Co., Shipbuilders, Inches (Upper Dock), Aberdeen, c1857 to c1866. (2019), 47 pages.</p> | <p>HALL RUSSELL REMEMBERED Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> | <p>2019-v1</p> <p>WILLIAM STEPHEN & CO. / WILLIAM STEPHEN & SONS, / ALEXANDER STEPHEN & SONS, SHIPBUILDERS, YORK STREET, FOOTDEE, ABERDEEN, 1793 TO 1830.</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> | <p>2019-v1</p> <p>DAVID BURNS & CO. SHIPBUILDERS, INCHES (UPPER DOCK) ABERDEEN, C1857 TO C1866.</p>  <p>STANLEY BRUCE</p> |
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