

# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN

by

Stan Bruce

Principal Surveyor, former shipbuilder.

Commemorating the 1872 Tea Race,  
between 'Thermopylae' and the 'Cutty Sark'.

Aberdeen Maritime Museum, 15 Oct. 2022.

# INTRODUCTION

- The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen Project.
- Stan Bruce and **Hall Russell Ltd.**
- **Walter Hood & Co.** - Builder of 'Thermopylae'.
- My Top 16 Aberdeen Built Ships (out of 3,000+).

# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT

[www.electricscotland.com](http://www.electricscotland.com)

<https://www.electricscotland.com/history/aberdeen/aberdeenshipbuilding.htm>

My personal project.

1<sup>st</sup> Volume uploaded in 2018.

Currently - 20 Shipbuilding volumes in pdf for free read or download.

1,742 pages uploaded so far, more to follow.



# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT

2018 - v1

**ABERDEEN CONCRETE  
SHIPBUILDING CO., LTD.,  
TORRY, ABERDEEN,  
1918 TO 1920.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

2021 - v2

**WALTER HOOD & CO.,  
SHIPBUILDERS, YORK  
STREET, FOOTDEE,  
ABERDEEN, 1839 TO 1881.**



**CELEBRATING THE 150-YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAUNCH  
OF THE THERMOPYLAE.**

**STANLEY BRUCE**

2018 v1

**LESLIE: Ship-owners,  
Shipmasters, and Shipbuilders of  
Aberdeen, An Introduction.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT

2019-v1.

**JOHN SMITH & CO.,  
SHIPBUILDERS, UPPER  
DOCK, ABERDEEN,  
C1862 TO 1867.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

2019-v1.



**SS INTABA, BUILT BY  
HALL, RUSSELL & CO., LTD,  
YORK PLACE, FOOTDEE,  
ABERDEEN, 1910.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

2019-v1

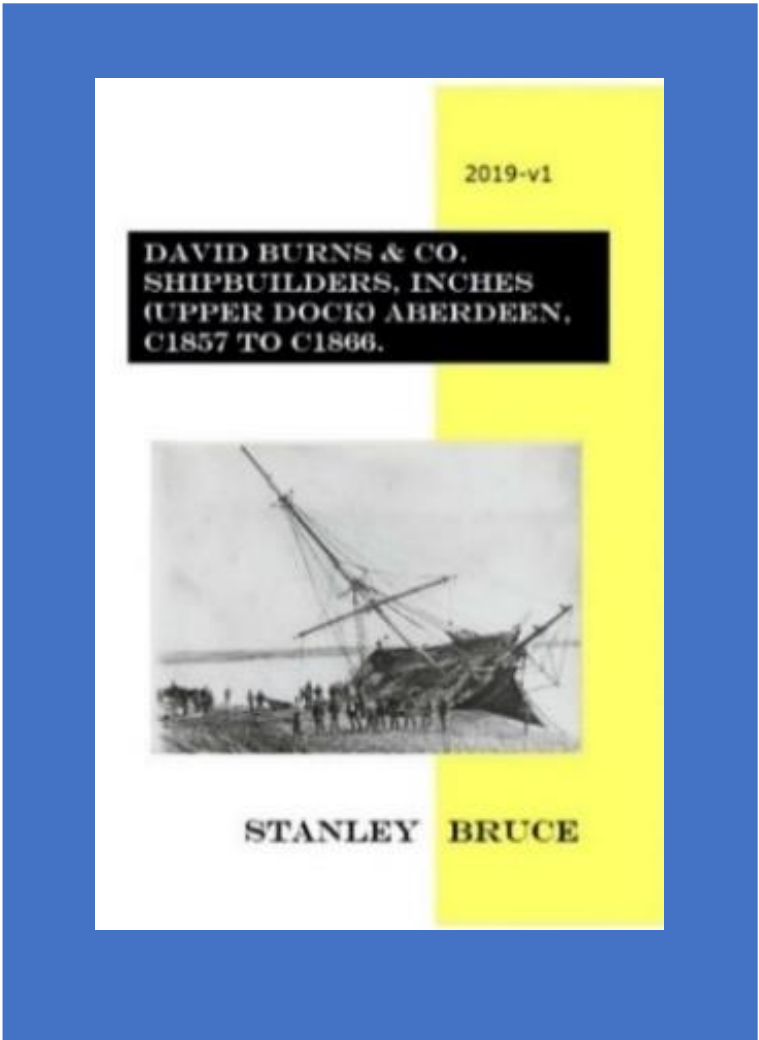
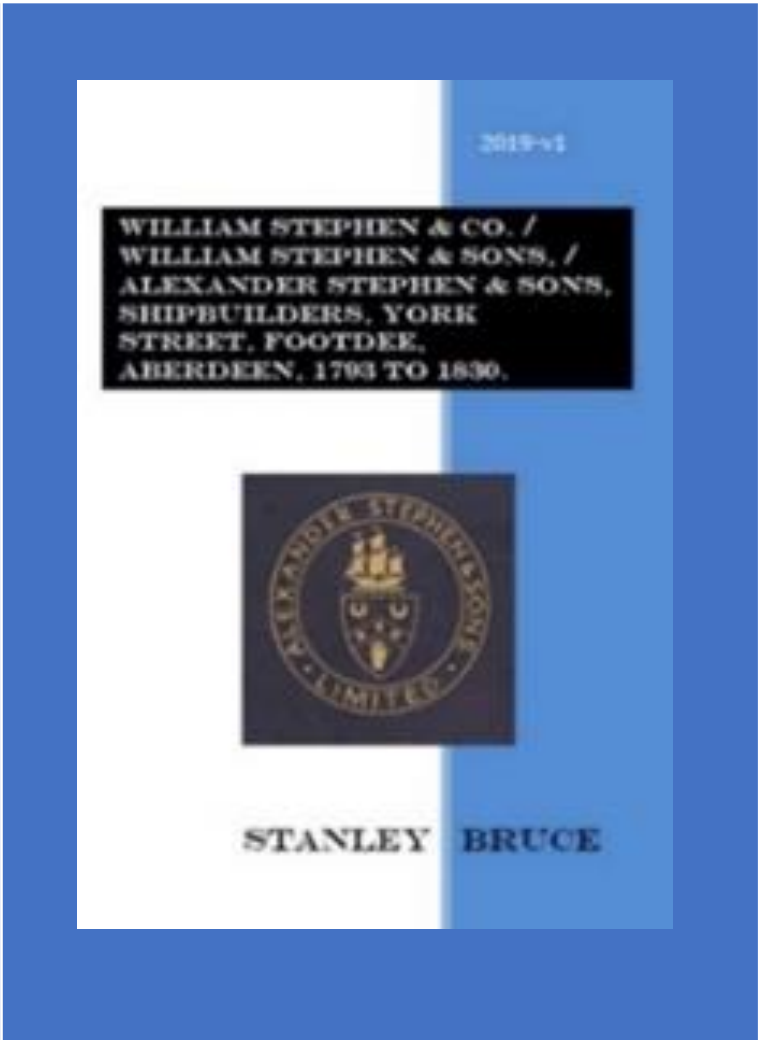
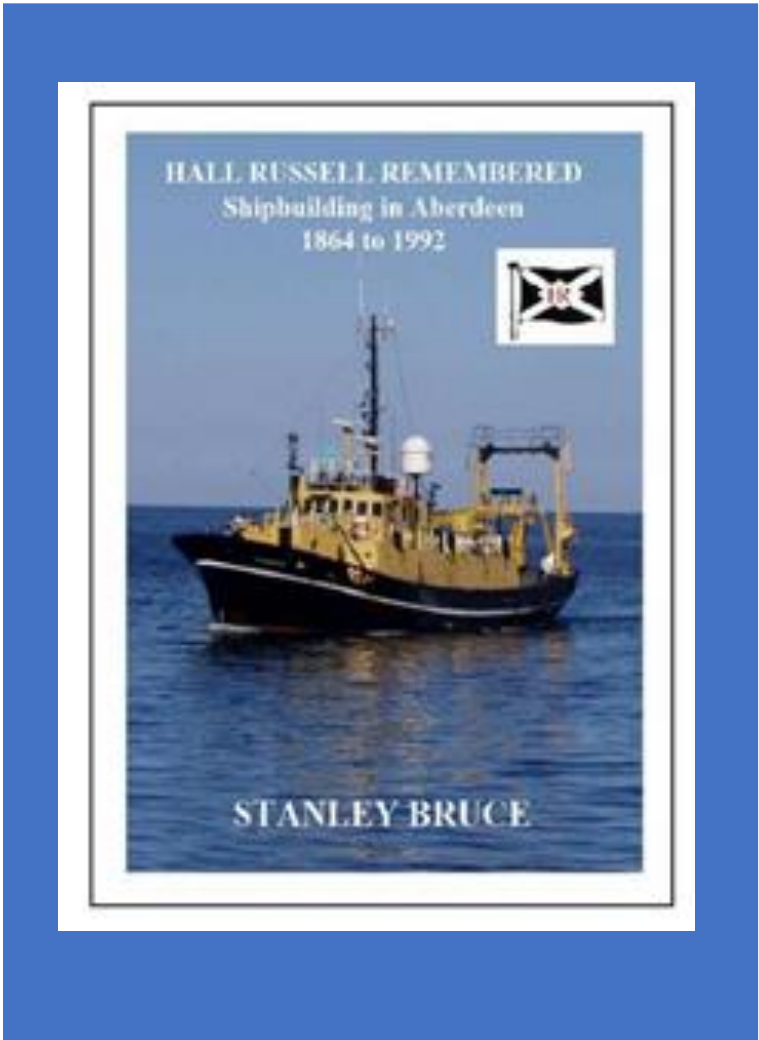
**RIFLEMAN, 3-Masted Sailing  
Ship, built in Aberdeen, 1860.**

**MURDERER ON BOARD**



**STANLEY BRUCE**


# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT



# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT

2020 - v1


**JOHN HUMPHREY & CO.,  
SHIPBUILDERS,  
UPPER DOCK, ABERDEEN,  
1865 TO 1875.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

2021 - v1


**Hall Russell Male Voice Choir,  
Aberdeen, 1918 to 1963.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

2021 - v1

**LECKIE, WOOD, &  
MUNRO, ENGINEERS &  
IRON SHIPBUILDERS,  
TERRY, ABERDEEN,  
1864 TO 1870.**



**STANLEY BRUCE**

# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT


<p>2021-v1</p> <p><b>WILLIAM DUTHIE JNR. &amp; CO., SHIPBUILDERS, UPPER DOCK, ABERDEEN, 1856 TO 1870.</b></p>  <p><small>INCLUDES INFORMATION ON DUTHIE &amp; COCHRAN, SHIPBUILDERS, MONTROSE 1864 TO 1866.</small></p> <p><b>STANLEY BRUCE</b></p>	<p>2021-v1</p> <p><b>ALEXANDER HALL &amp; CO., SHIPBUILDERS, FOOTDEE, ABERDEEN.</b></p> <p><b>THE 1860'S BOOM TO BUST</b></p>  <p><b>STANLEY BRUCE</b></p>	<p>2022-v1</p> <p><b>ROBERT &amp; PETER MATHESON, SHIPBUILDERS, TRINITY BUILDING YARD, ABERDEEN, C1824 TO C1827.</b></p>  <p><b>STANLEY BRUCE</b></p>
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# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT

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**Brands & Scorgie / Alexander Scorgie, Shipbuilders, Inches, Aberdeen, 1853 to 1856.¶**



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**ABERDEEN HARBOUR'S SHEAR POLES**


2022-v1



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**JOHN DUFFUS & CO., SHIPBUILDERS, FOOTDEE, ABERDEEN, 1826 TO 1845.¶**




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# THE SHIPBUILDERS OF ABERDEEN PROJECT

2022-v1

**THOMAS WRIGHT,  
SHIPBUILDERS, INCHES  
(UPPER DOCK,  
ABERDEEN, C1855 TO 1858.**



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2022-v1


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

**THE 1930's**



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2022-draft

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

**THE 1960's**

**Coming Soon**



STANLEY BRUCE





Hall Russell Ltd.  
1980 to 1991.  
Ship Draughtsman /  
Assistant Construction  
Manager.

← Walter Hood's  
Yard was here.

c1984

**ABOUT HALL RUSSELL**

Hall Russell began shipbuilding operations in 1867. During its long history as a shipbuilding company, it has made a significant contribution to the world shipping scene, building a variety of small to medium sized commercial and naval craft. In recent years the company has concentrated on the design and build of patrol craft and auxiliary vessels for the Royal Navy.

BS HR2/83

**Hall Russell Limited**

PO Box 36 York Place  
Aberdeen Scotland  
AB9 8BT  
Telephone 0224 29244  
Telex 73164

Telephone 0224 589244



**British Shipbuilders**

Benton House  
136 Sandyford Road  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
NE2 1QE  
Telephone 0632 326772  
Telex 537801

**British Shipbuilders**

197 Knightsbridge  
London SW7 1RB  
Telephone 01 581 1393  
Telex 8814702



On Sea trials off Aberdeen.





Name	Date Built	Name	Date Built
HMS Orkney (P299).	1976	HMS Lindisfarne (P300).	1978
HMS Jersey (P295).	1976	HMS Anglesey (P277).	1979
HMS Guernsey (P297).	1977	HMS Alderney (P278).	1979
HMS Shetland (P298).	1977		

## ISLAND CLASS

The first vessel I saw in **Hall Russell's**.

**HMS Alderney.**

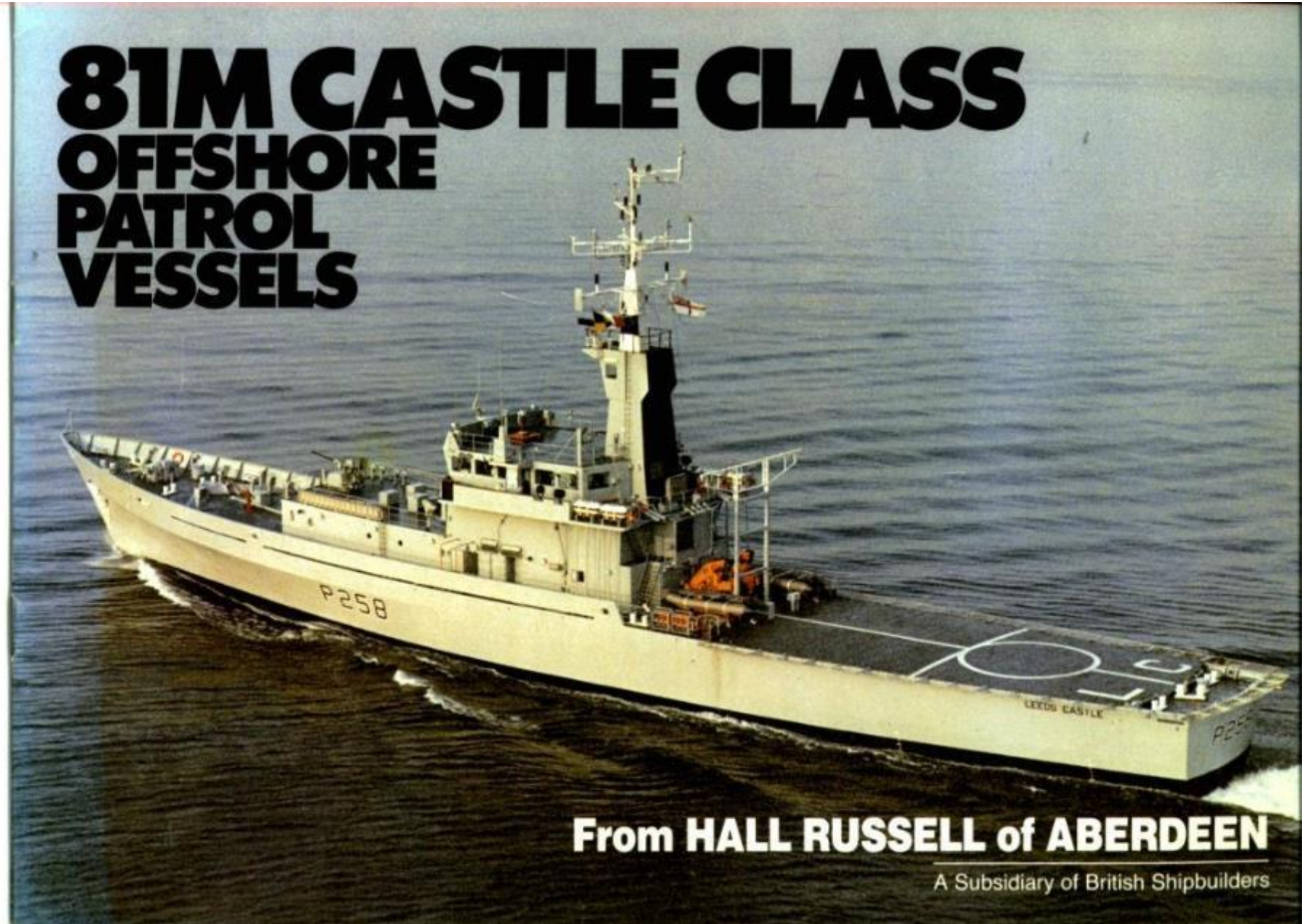




## Castle Class

HMS Leeds Castle,  
Launched 29<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1980.  
*First vessel I saw  
launched.*

HMS Dumbarton Castle,  
Launched 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1981.





# Peacock Class

Hong Kong Patrol Craft

HMS PEACOCK (1983)

HMS PLOVER (1984)

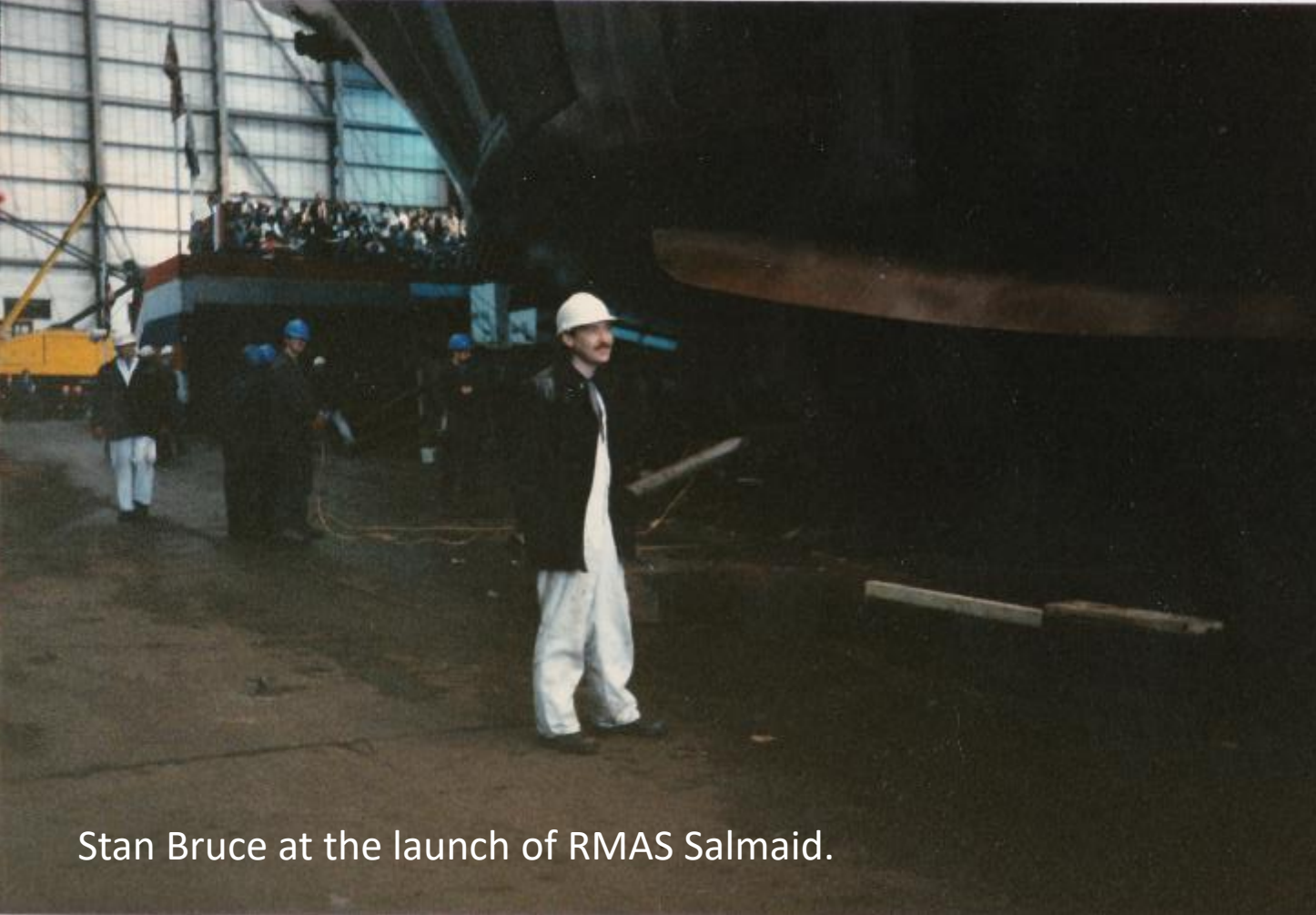
HMS STARLING (1984)

HMS SWALLOW (1984)

HMS SWIFT (1985)







Stan Bruce at the launch of RMAS Salmaid.



## MOORING AND SALVAGE VESSELS

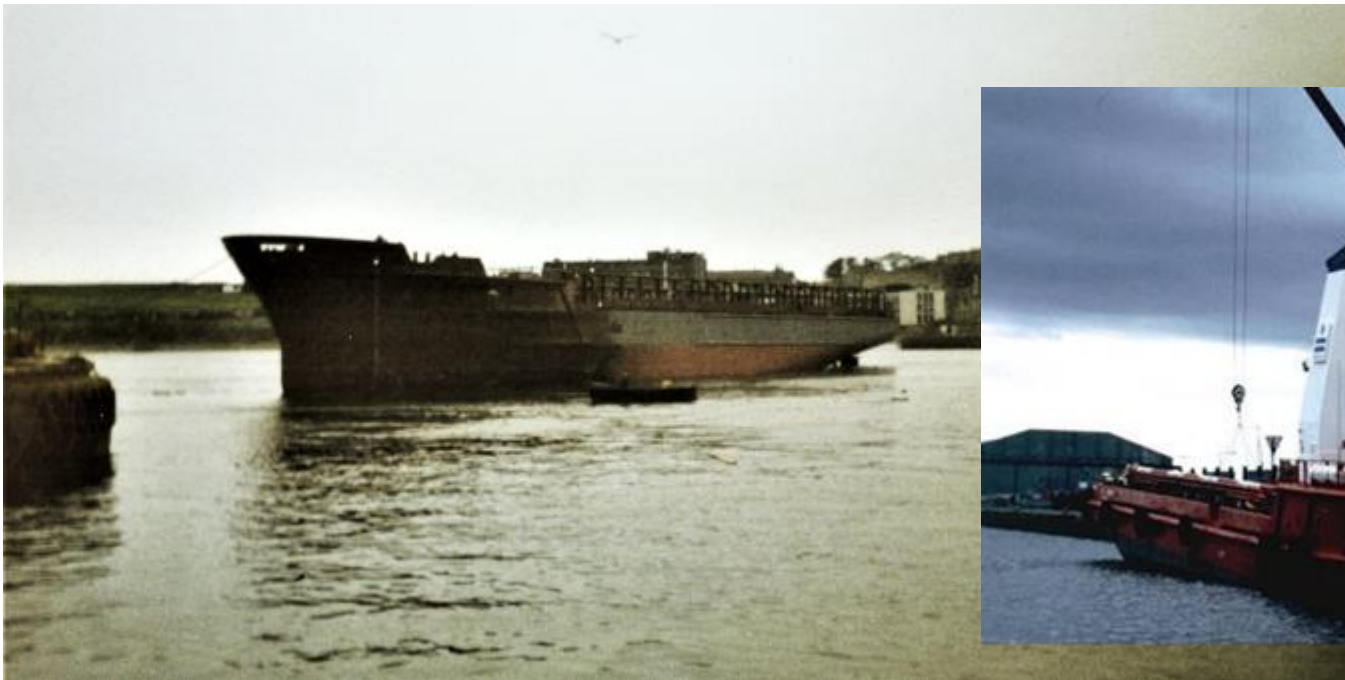
Launch of the **RMAS Salmaid** (1986).

3 built, the other 2 were **Salmaster** (1986) and **Salmoor** (1985).



**Supply Vessels**  
Top Stan Bruce and  
**Ballantine x 2**

Bottom  
**Skandi Falcon,**  
**Far Viscount /**  
**Seaforth Viscount**





# St Sunniva III.



Converted,  
ex MV Panther.



# RMS St Helena



Stanley Bruce

Passenger and cargo ship RMS (Royal Mail Ship) *St Helena* was the last ship to be fully built by Hall Russell and Co, Shipbuilders and Ship-Repairers, York Place, Aberdeen - but she very nearly wasn't.

If the yard had not been bought by A&P Appledore, and closed in 1989, the last ship built would have been Yard No995, *RMS Sobusaid* (A187), built for the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service in 1986, for service in HMNB Portsmouth, and since sold by the Royal Navy, circa 2013, to Hays Ships Ltd, Portlithon, Aberdeen, and renamed *Koosandis Cabon* after a conversion that included removal of her distinctive bow horns.

The *St Helena* was Hall Russell's Yard No1000 and was built with funds from the UK Government Overseas Development Agency (ODA). As far as I can remember, the original contract price was £19 million, but she ended up costing over £32 million. She was named after the island she was built to service, St Helena Island - one of the most remote inhabited islands in the world - is a

receivership, all that existed of the ship in the building hall were her double bottom sections. Now, the 1.5m-high sections didn't even look like a ship at that early stage, and the yard management thought that the ODA might decide to have the ship built elsewhere. The belief was that if it looked like a good portion of the ship had been built, the contract would remain with Hall Russell and prospective new owners would be more likely to buy the yard.

Great efforts were therefore made to bring all the units (steel sections of the ship) out of the fabrication bays and into the building hall. The units forming the 'tween deck and the main deck were placed on top of each other, in their correct positions tacked, and safely secured, but not faired and welded. Now when you entered the building hall, it looked like a ship - or at least the hull of a ship, basically as you see it in the launch photograph below.

The plan worked: A&P Appledore bought the yard and took on the contract to complete the vessel. The yard was saved,



Launch of RMS *St Helena* in 1989 - Stanley Bruce is standing on the bow, directly above the 'S'. After the yard closed, the building hall was bought by Score, Peterhead, and it now forms the central part of their Peterhead facility at Inverurie, on the site of the former distillery

UK Overseas Territory, located 1200 miles off the West Coast of Africa, in the South Atlantic. The ship was built to also service Ascension Islands, Tristan da Cunha, and Cape Town, from the port of Cardiff.

The naming ceremony was carried out by Prince Andrew, who smashed the bottle on her bow at her launch, in 1989.

During the early stages of the building of RMS *St Helena*, Hall Russell went into receivership. It is worth noting here that the company had been turning a profit for decades. At the point of going into

receivership, all that existed of the ship in the building hall were her double bottom sections. Now, the 1.5m-high sections didn't even look like a ship at that early stage, and the yard management thought that the ODA might decide to have the ship built elsewhere. The belief was that if it looked like a good portion of the ship had been built, the contract would remain with Hall Russell and prospective new owners would be more likely to buy the yard.

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RMS *St Helena* and RMS *Salsmaid* (right) - photographs by J Addison, Cullen



RMS *St Helena* in James Bay

however, the 'tween deck units also had distorted plates in the vertical direction, due to the weight of the main deck units sitting above. Although the yard had been saved, it was only a stay of execution and it ended up closing two years later, early in 1992.

Back to the ship: she has served the islanders of St Helena for 27 years and has been their sole lifeline to the outside world. The mayor of Jamestown, the capital of St Helena Island, was so elated about the new ship arriving, on 30 November 1990, that he declared a local holiday to celebrate her arrival, and around half of the islanders turned out to see her. She was about double the size of her predecessor, with more accommodation and cargo space, and I imagine they were very pleased when they first saw her. So important was she to the island that they produced a set of stamps to commemorate her maiden voyage, and another set on her 25th anniversary.

During her lifetime, RMS *St Helena* made 243 round trips from the island to the UK, covering 1.1 million miles. Although not sailing to the UK anymore, she is



RMS *St Helena* at Hall Russell outfitting quay - photograph by Stanley Bruce

currently still sailing between Ascension, Cape Town and the St Helena Island, and will do so until - according to the latest update - February 2018. While the island's first airport, costing £250 million, was certified 'open' last summer, turbulence and wind shear make it difficult for planes to land, and so there is still an important job to be done by the much-loved ship, made in Aberdeen.

*"She is one of only two ocean-going vessels in the world still to carry the venerable title of Royal Mail Ship. RMS St Helena is not just a passenger vessel; it's a working ship, plying the Atlantic Ocean, carrying goods and people nearly halfway around the world. When you sail on the RMS, you are following in the wake of the generations of travellers and explorers who crossed the world's oceans in the leisurely days before air travel. A voyage on the RMS is an unforgettable experience - a blue water voyage on a working ship to unspoilt and remote islands."* rmssthelena.com



## RMS *St Helena*

Launched: 1989  
 Delivered: 1990  
 Gross Weight: 6767 tonnes  
 Deadweight: 3130 tonnes  
 Length: 105m  
 Beam: 19.2m  
 Draft: 6m  
 Speed: 14.5 knots  
 Accommodation: 156 passengers in 56 cabins  
 Staff: 56 officers and crew



Stanley Bruce in 1988

Stanley Bruce, BSc, (Eng, MIMarEST), is a former Hall Russell shipyard employee and author of *Hall Russell Remembered*.



<https://www.scottishfield.co.uk/culture/the-150th-birthday-of-the-fastest-clipper-to-sail-the-seas/>

# Sailing at a good clip

This month marks the 150th anniversary of the launch of the Aberdeen-built Thermopylae, the fastest clipper that ever sailed. **Stanley Bruce** reports

English poet and writer Cicely Fox Smith wrote, 'Of all that fleet of swift and lovely ships, none was perhaps ever built more lovely and more swift than the famous clipper Thermopylae... there was some secret quality which moved a seaman's heart with emotion of apprehended beauty.'

Designed by Bernard Wymouth of Lloyds Register of Shipping, Thermopylae was built by Walter Hood of Aberdeen with copper sheathing and a composite hull and was given a high 17A1 classification.

Priced at £9,000, the 212ft, three-masted, square-rigged tea clipper was 991 gross registered tons, with a depth of 20.9ft and boasted a 36ft beam. She was built for George Thomson's Aberdeen White Star Line specifically for trade with China. Named by the wife of one of Thomson's friends, Thermopylae was launched on 19 August 1868.

Speed was required to get the tea home quickly, and to evade pirates in the China Seas, and this is where Thermopylae quite literally excelled. British historian and



sailor Basil Lubbock wrote in his book *The China Clippers* that she was 'the pride of the British Merchant service and justly considered by most seamen to have been the fastest sailing ship ever launched'.

**She sailed her maiden voyage from Gravesend to Melbourne in a record-breaking 63 days, which is still the fastest passage on record'**

Above left: Bernard Wymouth of Lloyds Register of Shipping. Main image: Thermopylae in full sail. Below: Thermopylae figurehead.



## THERMOPYLAE

She was the fastest clipper ever built. Built by Hood's of Aberdeen. Her lines were drawn with an 'Aberdeen Bow'. She was gracious, sleek, and lean.

Her hull had wooden planks. Her frames were made of iron. Her beauty was so great. She could inspire Lord Byron.

On her maiden voyage. Off to Australia record she did break. Sailing there in only sixty-three days. Leaving all others in her wake.

Her snow-white canvas sails. Her magnificence beyond compare. No other clipper ever built. Had such elegance and flair.

She traded in the Far East. Carrying a cargo of tea. And being owned by a conny Aberdonian. They say she never once sailed empty.

She sailed her maiden voyage from Gravesend to Hobson's Bay in Melbourne on 8 November 1868 in a record-breaking 63 days, which is still the fastest passage on record ever by a sailing ship.

Her greatest rival was the Cutty Sark, which was designed by Hercules Linton from Inverhervie, Aberdeenshire and completed in 1869. It can be argued that the two greatest sailing ships ever built had Aberdeen roots.

The two ships, both laden with tea, were put to the test on 8 June 1872 in a race from Shanghai to London. During the passage, the Cutty Sark lost her rudder and Thermopylae arrived in the

Downs on 12 October 1872, six days before her rival. Two things won her the race: great seamanship and her quality of build – testament to the shipbuilders of Aberdeen.

Lubbock wrote, 'The racing clippers loaded their tea cargoes at Foochow, and the splendid fleet as it assembled in the harbour was a sight

to gladden the hearts of all seafarers.

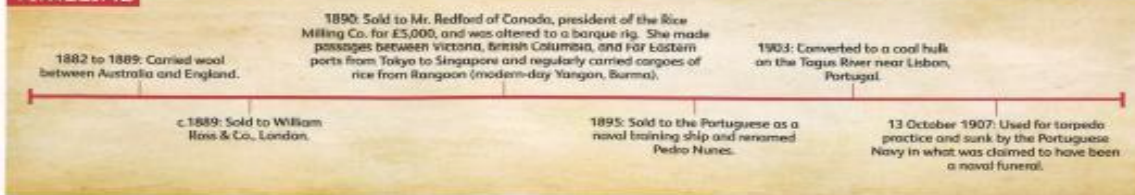
'The ships with their glistening black hulls, snow-white decks, golden gingerbread work, carving at bow and stern, newly varnished teak deck-fittings, glittering brass and burnished copper were things of dazzling beauty, and in all the fine

array none could compare with the loveliness of the White Star clippers.'

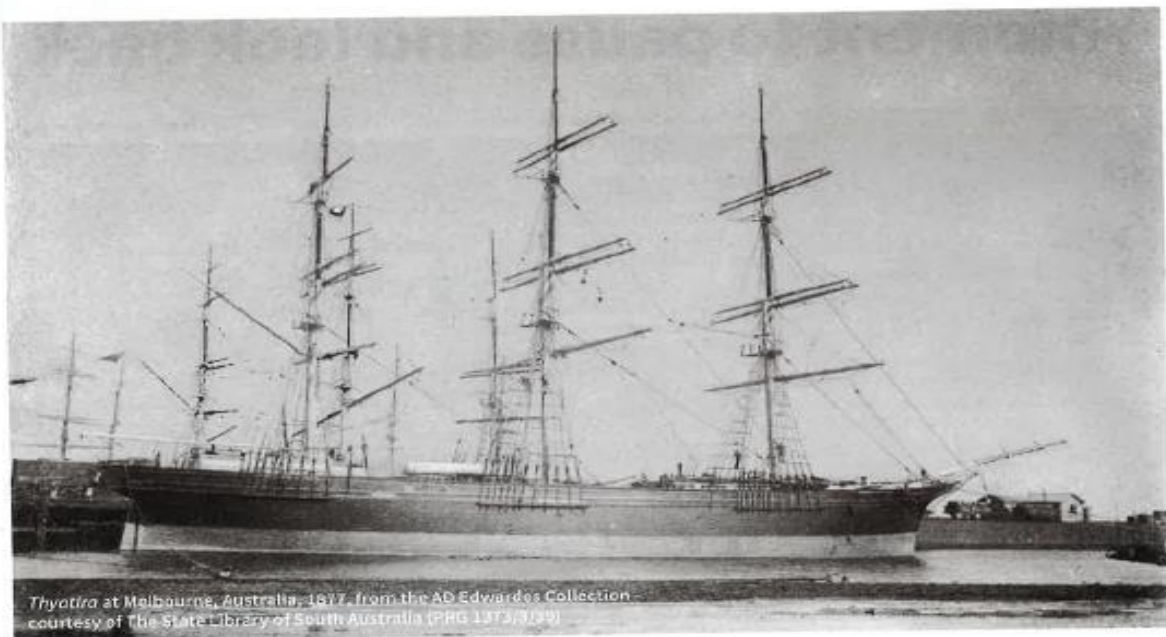
However, with the opening of the Suez Canal on 17 November 1869, steam ships could bring the tea home quicker than sailing ships, so Thermopylae began carrying wool from Australia from 1882 onward.

In 1897, she was sold to Portugal for use as a naval training ship and was renamed Pedro Nunes. The Portuguese Navy towed her down the Tagus River using two warships in October 1907 and she was torpedoed off Cascais with full naval honours in front of Amelia de Orleans, Queen of Portugal.

## TIMELINE







Thyatira at Melbourne, Australia, 1877. from the AD Edwards Collection courtesy of The State Library of South Australia (PHG 1973/309)

# The Thyatira



Stanley Bruce

**N**amed after an ancient Greek city, now known as the Turkish city of Akhisar (meaning 'white castle'), she was the first composite ship built by Walter Hood & Co, Shipbuilders, Footdee, Aberdeen, and the first composite ship built for George Thompson's Aberdeen (White Star) Line. A composite ship is one constructed using a combination of wood and iron, which made it much stronger than wood alone. All of Hood's ships built up to this date were constructed of wood.

Thyatira - the 29th ship Walter Hood built for George Thompson - was purposely

made for trade with Australia and China. Built under special survey by Lloyds Register of Shipping, she was classified, in 1867, as '17A1' - the highest classification Walter Hood had received on any of his ships up to this date.

On her maiden voyage, she made the passage from London to Melbourne in 77 days. It was a very fast passage at that time, as other ships were typically taking between 80 and 110 days. She took 96 days to return, but in 1881 made her fastest-ever passage to Melbourne in only 75 days.

The Aberdeen (White Star) Line was

**August 2017 marks the 150-year anniversary of the launch of the Aberdeen-built clipper ship, Thyatira.**

established in 1825 by George Thompson Junior (c1804-95), aged only 21 years. He attended Aberdeen Grammar School, and, prior to opening his own company, worked in the Aberdeen office of the London Shipping Co. Thompson's company was initially set up to run sailing ships carrying emigrant passengers to Quebec/ St Lawrence, Canada, and returning with timber. Some of the timber imported would have been used locally for shipbuilding.

By 1837, the Aberdeen Line had a fleet of 12 sailing ships and, around 1840, they started to sail to the Far East, New Zealand

and Australia. It is said that Thompson never insured his ships against loss; rather, he reinvested the money in maintenance, safety, and in buying new ships.

From 1840 to 1881, Walter Hood built 43 ships for George Thompson's Aberdeen White Star Line - that's one every year, plus one. They were fine-looking vessels, admired in ports all over the world for their green-painted hulls; white masts, yards, bowsprit and blocks; grand, white figureheads; snow-white decks, gold stripes and scroll work, and wealth of brass fittings. There was an obvious reason why Hood's built so many ships for Thompson's: in 1842, George Thompson bought into the company of Walter Hood & Co and became a principal partner.

In 1854, Thompson's son-in-law, William Henderson, established the White Star Line's London office, at No7 Billiter Square, London. It was from here that Thyatira and other Aberdeen Line ships sailed to Melbourne/Sydney and onwards to Shanghai/Poochoo/Whampoa and back.

Thyatira had quite an eventful life, sailing 29 years before sinking in dramatic circumstances:

**Basil Lubbock**, in his book *Colonial Clippers* (1921), tells the story of second mate Mark Breach, who had newly joined the ship's crew in London and was overseeing the stowage of cargo, when he spotted a visitor on board smoking a pipe. Breach, ignorant as to the man's identity, politely asked the gentleman to extinguish his pipe as smoking was not allowed due to the risk of fire. Without disclosing his identity, the gentleman apologised and immediately put his pipe out. After the visitor had left, the first mate asked Breach what he was talking to Mr Thompson about. Breach was rather worried when he learned it was the ship's owner, Stephen Thompson (son of George), whom he'd told off. Later, the first mate told Breach that "Stephen Thompson had been very pleased and prophesied that he would be a good servant to the company". Breach later became one of the company's best-known captains.

**On 29 October 1872**, the wife of Captain John McKay gave birth to a daughter on board, while sailing in the Indian Ocean.

**On 17 September 1879**, *The Melbourne Argus* newspaper reported: "At Williamston



Railway Pier, Williamstown, c1883 - photograph by Charles Nettleton (1826-1902) - courtesy of The State Library of Victoria (Image no H82.1462)

*Coast*, three men belonging to ship **THYATIRA** charged with disobedience of orders on 29th August, when vessel was at sea. Defendants had declined to wash down paint when ordered. Their excuse that weather was too rough. Sentenced to seven-day imprisonment". There was no verbal warning in those days - it was straight to the sheriff and then off to prison.

**On 26 January 1882**, at midnight, en route from Melbourne to London with a cargo of wool, Thyatira collided with the 26-year-old *Atmosphere* (sailing under a British flag), en route from Liverpool for Valparaiso with coal. The *Atmosphere* sank quickly; however, all her crew, except for the steward (who, it is thought, died on board in the accident), were taken on board the *Thyatira*. While *Thyatira* lost her jib boom and some spars in the collision, her composite design was much stronger than the other, conventional wooden, ship and she suffered less damage.

**On 24 October 1889**, *The Melbourne Argus* reported that an inquest was heard regarding sailor John Shand, aged 45 years, who supposedly drowned at Williamstown, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, by falling between the ship and the harbour pier. At the time, Williamston was the major cargo port of Victoria.

**In 1894**, *Thyatira* was sold to JW Woodside & Co, Belfast.

**On 16 July 1896**, she left London, bound for Rio de Janeiro under the

command of Captain Winterton, on what was to be her last passage. She was carrying general cargo, including 800 packages of dynamite. Survivors reported an uncontrollable fire on board, and the captain, recognising the danger posed by the dynamite, ordered the crew to lower the lifeboats and abandon ship. Thanks to his swift decision, *Thyatira*'s entire crew survived. The ship was said to have split in half when the dynamite exploded, and it sank in the darkness of night. The wreck site is reported as Ponta da Barra, Maceió, State of Alagoas, Brazil.

**In 2012**, the wreck of *Thyatira* was accidentally found in 30 metres of water, by Brazilian diver Fernando Vagner, who was sent down to free some entangled nets belonging to local shrimp fishermen.

Hopefully, in the light of this discovery, we will hear more about the ship in future.

Thyatira	
Rig	Ship, three masts, square-rigged
GRT	962 tons
Length	201'6" (61.42m)
Breadth	33'10" (10.31m)
Depth	21'6" (6.55m)
Figurehead	Unknown

Stanley Bruce, BSc, IEng, MIMarEST, is a former Hall Russell shipyard employee and author of *Hall Russell Remembered*.



# The End of Hall Russell Ltd., Shipbuilders, Aberdeen.

**1988, Nov.:** Hall Russell went into liquidation during the build of yard No. 1000, 'RMS St Helena' ferry (£19 million).

**1989, Feb.:** A& P Appledore (Aberdeen) Ltd. took over the yard and the contract for 'RMS St Helena' (now £31 million).

**1989, 31<sup>st</sup> October:** 'RMS St Helena' was launched.

**1990, September:** 'RMS St Helena' delivered.

**1989:** 'St Ola', yard No. 1001, refit and stability sponsons fitted (£1/2 million).

**1990:** Yard No. 1002 an Ulstein 704 hull was launched, which was fitted out in Norway and named 'Skandi Falcon'.

**1991, Feb.:** I left A&P Appledore (Aberdeen) Ltd. and joined Det Norske Veritas (DNV) as a surveyor. Currently - Principal Surveyor.

**1992:** A&P Appledore (Aberdeen) Ltd. closed early in 1992, equipt was auctioned March 1992.

What could have been!

STANDBY SAFETY VESSEL



Admiral class

Designed by A&P Appledore for use in the North Sea – Never built!

# Walter Hood & Co. - Builder of Thermopylae.

- In business 1839 to 1881, and built 100 sailing vessels.
- George Thompson Jnr. was a partner.
- 1851 census states **Walter Hood** employed 120 workers.
- Built '**Thermopylae**' (991 tons) in 1868.
- From c1866, Cornelius Thompson designed many of the vessels.
- **Cornelius** assisted Bernard Waymouth in the '**Thermopylae**' design.
- **Walter Hood** built 43 ships for the Aberdeen Line (George Thompson Jnr. & Co.), plus another 14 ships part-owned or owned by George Thompson Jnr.
- Built vessels of wood, composite and iron. (No engines).
- Biggest vessel built – '**Aristides**' (1,721 tons) built of iron in 1876.



# Walter Hood.

Born 20<sup>th</sup> August 1802 in Brechin.

Died in 27<sup>th</sup> December 1862 in Aberdeen.

Buried in the Nellfield Cemetery, Aberdeen.

## ***Also buried here:***

William Henderson (Shipowner).

Cornelius Thompson (Shipowner) and family.

J. T. Rennie (Shipowner).

Alexander Duthie (Shipbuilder and shipowner).

John Duthie of Cairnbulg.



*Gravestone of  
Walter Hood.*



# Cutty Sark, link to Aberdeen.

**Designer** – Hercules Linton (1837 to 1900). Born at Inverbervie.

**1855, 1<sup>st</sup> January:** Linton, aged 19-years was apprenticed to **Alexander Hall & Co.**, Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, for six years.

**1868, May:** Linton entered a shipbuilding partnership with William Dundas Scott-Moncrieff to form the firm of **Scott and Linton**, Shipbuilders of Dumbarton. It was there in 1869 where he designed, and they partly-built the composite-hulled 3-masted ship the '**Cutty Sark**' (963 tons) before going out of business in September 1869.

**1869, December:** Linton joined **Leckie, Wood & Munro**, Torry, Aberdeen as the head of the modelling and design department, left after 4-months.

Followed in his father's footsteps as a ship surveyor. His father worked in Banff and Fraserburgh as a ship surveyor.

*(More info in my Leckie, Wood and Munro book).*



My Top 16 Aberdeen Built Ships.  
Out of 3,000+  
(> 1 million tons)

In chronological order.



# Queen of Scotland.

Paddle Steamer  
built for  
Aberdeen &  
London Steam  
Navigation Co.  
(John Duffus &  
Co., managers).



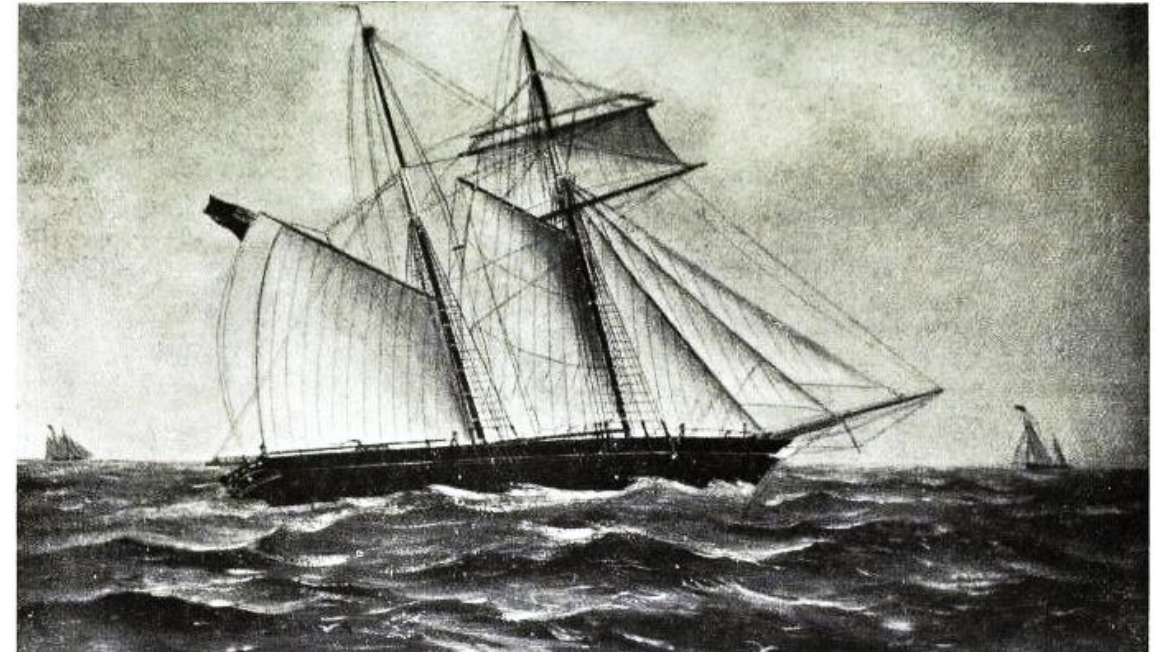
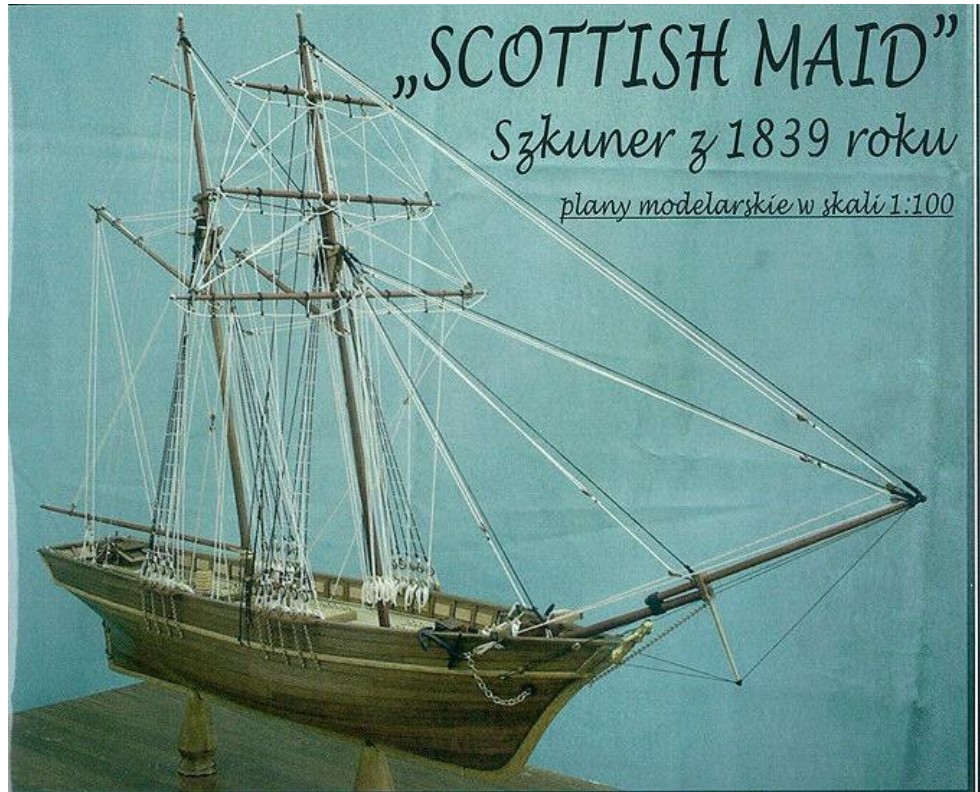
1827

Queen of Scotland  
(304 tons).

John Duffus & Co.,  
Footdee.

1<sup>st</sup> steamship built in  
Aberdeen.

# Scottish Maid.



As painted by J. Fanner 1888.

1839

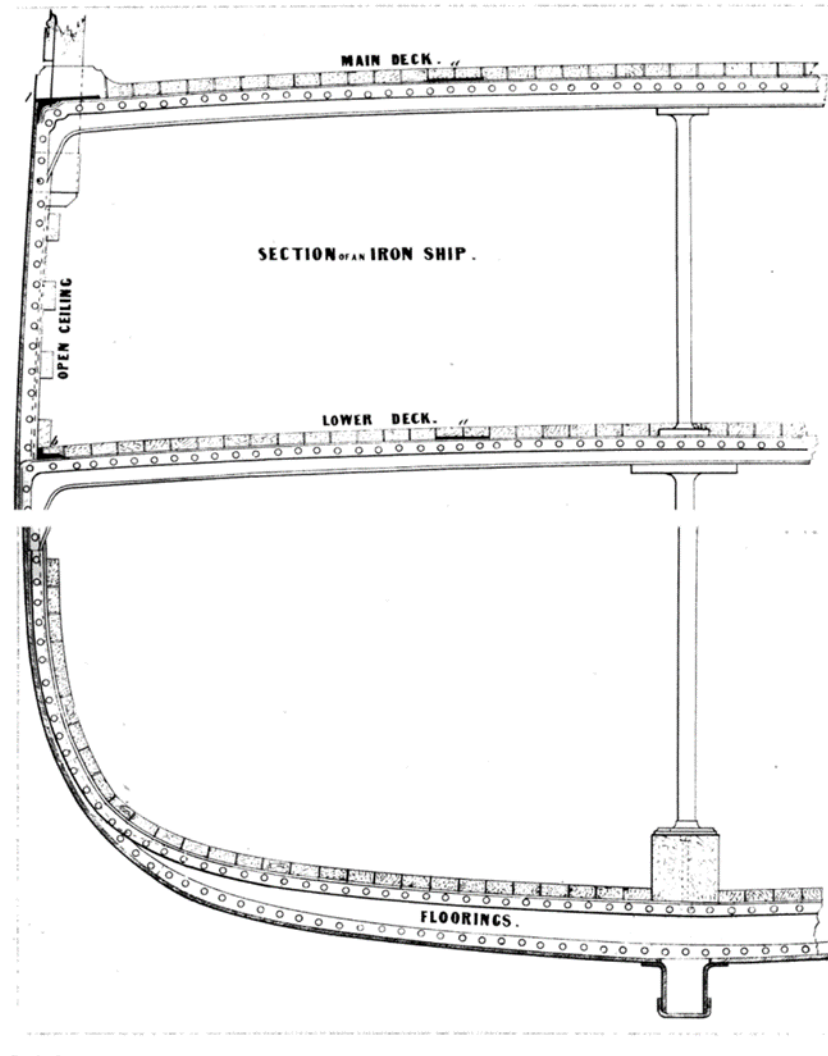
Scottish Maid,  
Topsail Schooner  
(142 tons)

Alexander Hall  
& Co., Footdee.

1<sup>st</sup> sailing ship built with what was  
to become known as an 'Aberdeen  
Bow'.



# John Garrow.



1840

John Garrow, ship  
(555 tons).

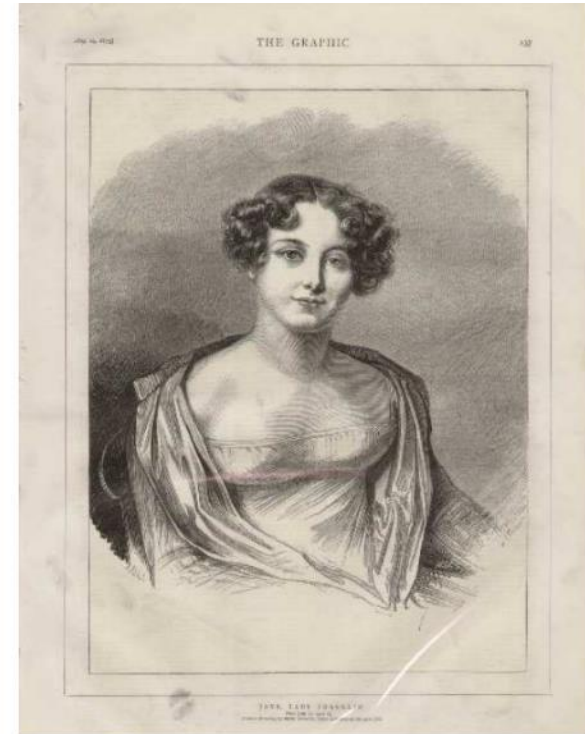
John Ronald & Co.,  
Footdee.

1<sup>st</sup> Iron vessel built in  
Aberdeen.

# Lady Franklin.



*Sir John Franklin, engraved by D. J. Pound, from a drawing by Negelen.*



*Lady Franklin drawn by M. Romilly (Graphic 1815).*

**1850**

**Lady Franklin,  
Brig (201 tons).**

**Walter Hood &  
Co., Footdee.**

**Sailed in 1850 /1851  
Franklin search  
expedition to the Arctic.**



# Mimosa.

Today – 50,000  
Welsh descendants  
with 5,000 of them  
speaking Welsh live  
in Patagonia.



**1853**

**Mimosa,  
ship, (447  
tons NM).**

**Alexander Hall &  
Co., Footdee.**

**1865: She carried the first  
153 Welsh colonists to  
Patagonia, South America.**

# Schomberg.

Sank on her maiden voyage at Victoria, Australia.

Owner: Black Ball Line.

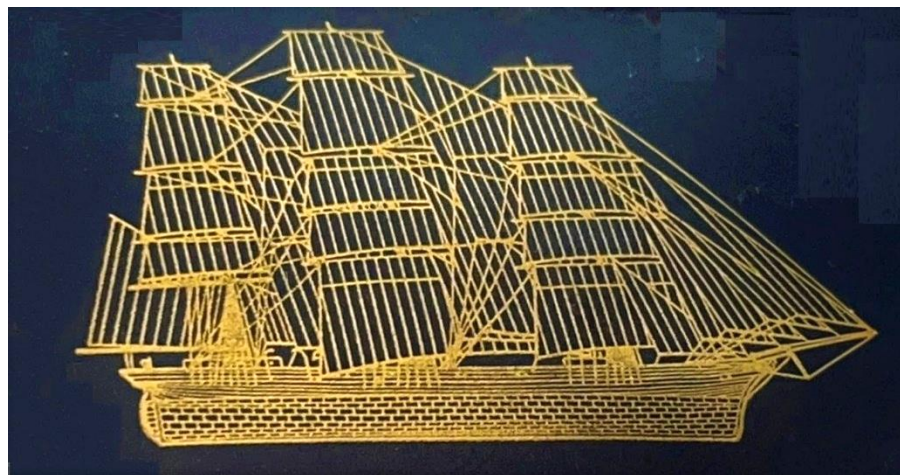
Master – Captain Forbes.



1855	Schomberg, ship (2,600 tons).	Alexander Hall & Co., Footdee.	Largest sailing ship built in Aberdeen, 2,284 tons (NM) / 2,600 tons (OM) & 288 feet long.
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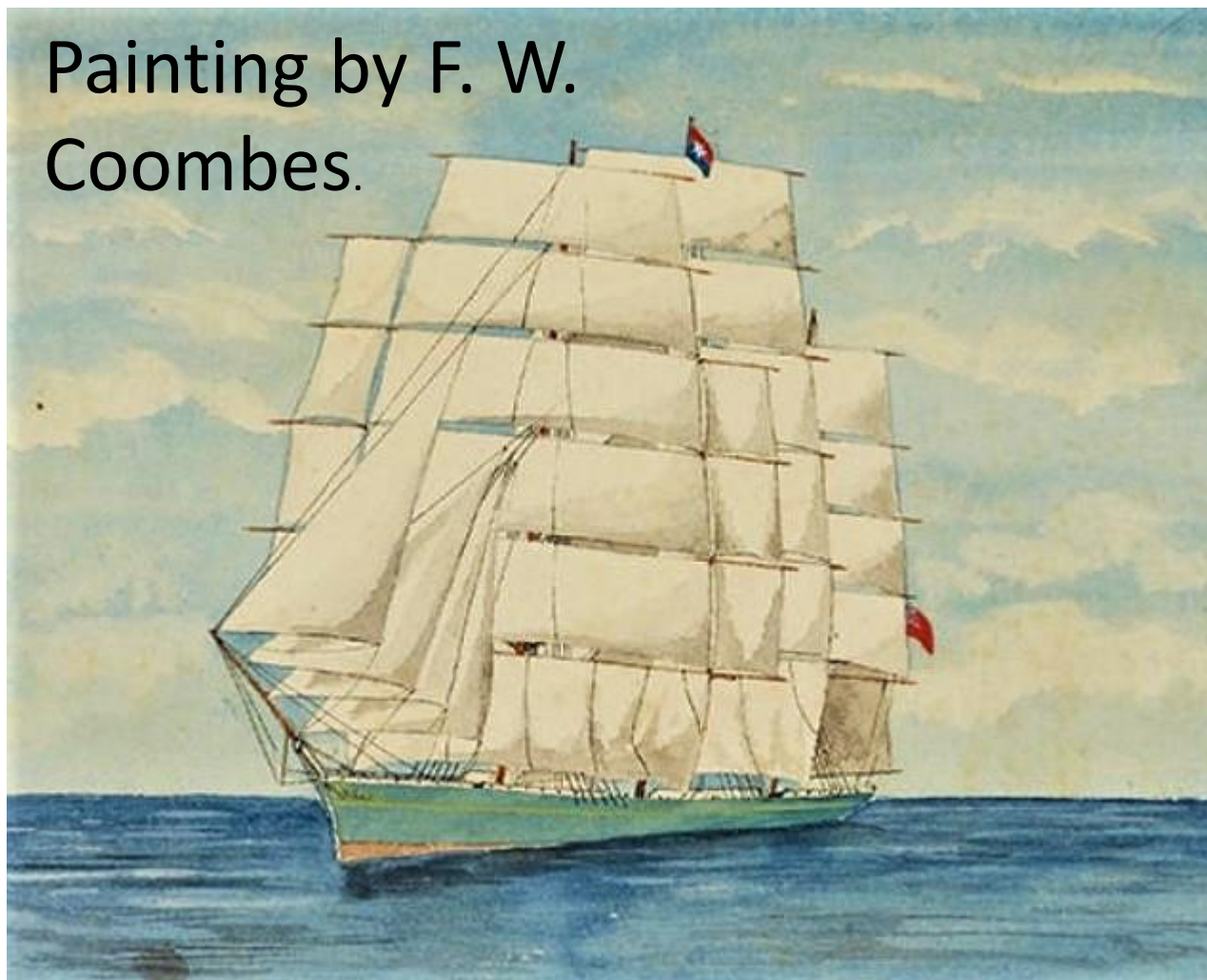


# Thermopylae.



John Pinches Ltd. trinket box, 1980.

Painting by F. W.  
Coombes.

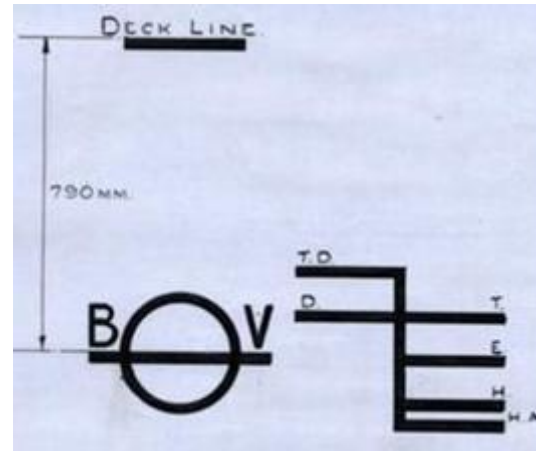


1868	Thermopylae, ship (947 tons).	Walter Hood & Co., Footdee.	Fastest clipper ship that ever sailed.
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# Samuel Plimsoll.

MP Samuel Plimsoll.  
Typical load line.

Owned by GTJ.  
Shows he was a  
responsible shipowner.



1873

Samuel  
Plimsoll, Ship,  
(1,520 tons)

Walter Hood &  
Co., Footdee.

She had the Plimsoll load line  
fitted, when built, before the  
government Act of 1876.



# Elissa.

1877

Elissa, barque (430 tons).

Alexander Hall & Co., Footdee.

The only 19<sup>th</sup> century Aberdeen built sailing ship still sailing.

Currently berthed in Galveston, Texas.

Photo by Steve Canup





# Cretetree.



Photo by Marc Calhoun.

1919	Cretetree, Barge (1,000 tons).	Aberdeen Concrete Shipbuilding Co., Torry.	1 <sup>st</sup> concrete-hulled vessel built in Aberdeen. Currently used as a jetty at Scalpay, Harris.
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# St Sunniva II.

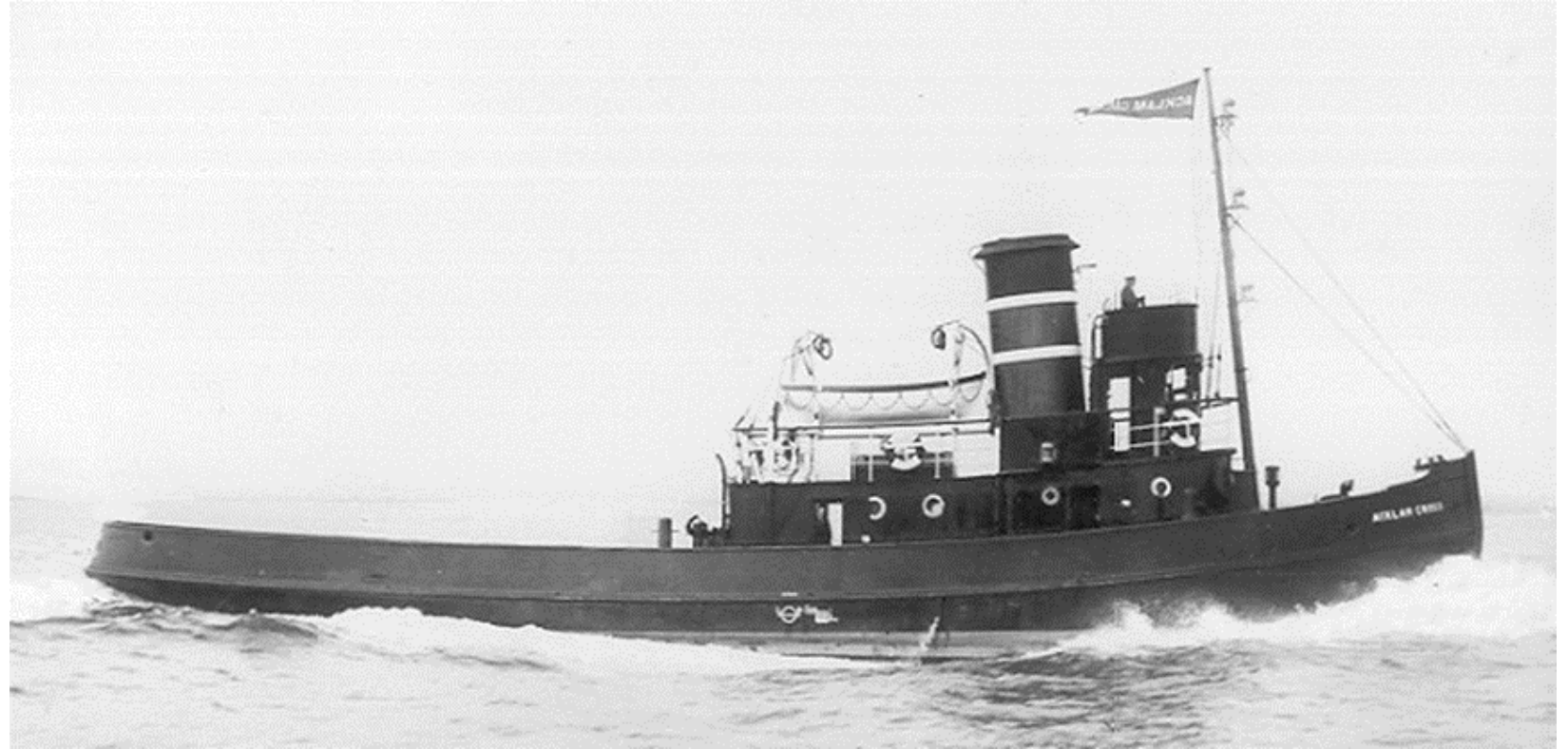
Owned by the  
North of Scotland &  
Orkney & Shetland  
Steam Navigation  
Company.  
She sank Jan. 1943,  
overcome with ice.



1931	St. Sunniva (II), passenger/cargo (1,368 tons) .	Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Footdee.	Most beautiful ship ever built in Aberdeen. (Stan's opinion).
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# Acklam Cross.

Earliest diesel/electric vessel I could find was the 'Vandal' Built in Russia in 1903.



1933	Acklam Cross, Tug (150 tons).	Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Footdee.	1 <sup>st</sup> diesel / electric vessel built in Aberdeen.
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# FRV Sir William Hardy (Rainbow Warrior).

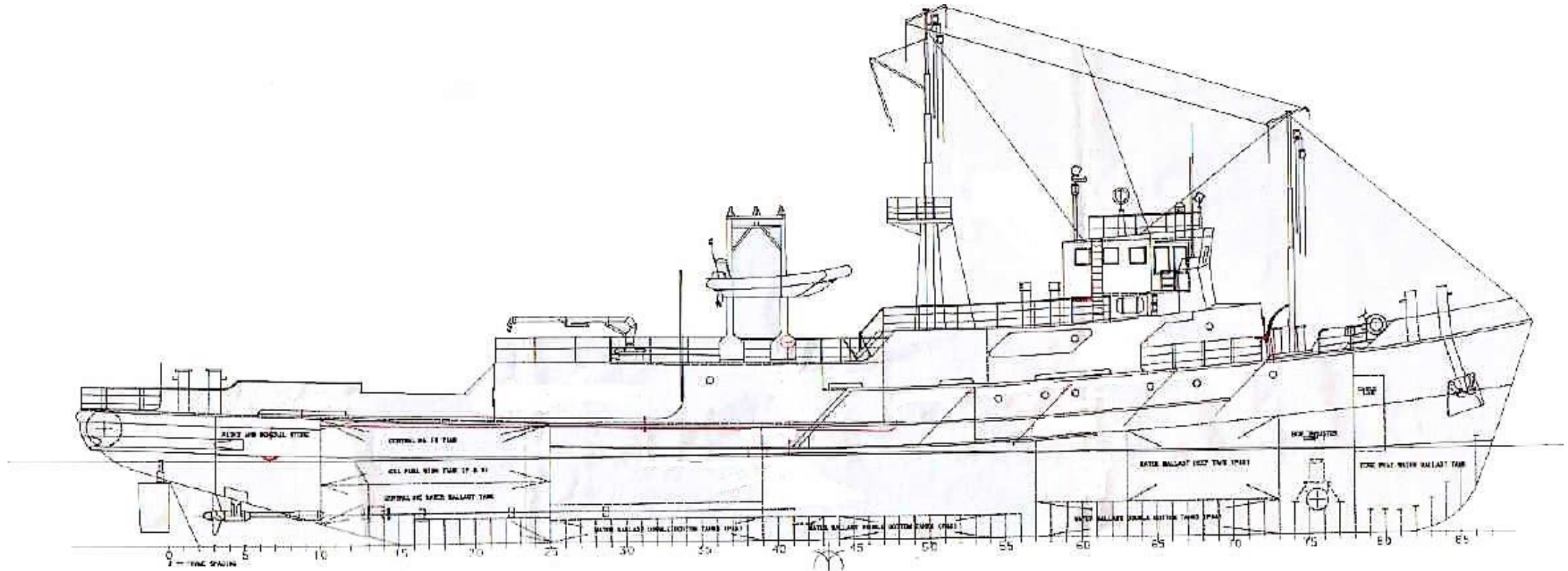
10<sup>th</sup> July 1985 she was bombed in Auckland Harbour, New Zealand by French agents.



Amsterdam 1981 - Photo by Nans Van Dijk.

1955	FRV Sir William Hardy, (418 tons).	Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Footdee.	1978: bought by Greenpeace and renamed 'Rainbow Warrior'.
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# Lady Alison.



1965	Lady Alison, OSV (854 tons).	Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Footdee.	1 <sup>st</sup> Oil Supply Vessel built in Aberdeen for the North Sea.
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# Thameshaven.



1971	Thameshaven, cargo vessel (8,992 tons).	Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Footdee.	Largest vessel ever built in Aberdeen.
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# RMS St Helena.

Stan Bruce



1990

RMS St. Helena,  
passenger/cargo  
vessel (6,876 tons).

Hall Russell Ltd.,  
Footdee.

Last ocean-going ship built  
(fully completed) in Aberdeen.



# Thanks.

Thanks to Ricky Somerville and Gavin Gatt of Weldtech Services, Mains of Cairnorrie, Methlick, AB41 7DA, who as a personal favour to me cut the plaque free of charge showing the **'Thermopylae'** leading the **'Cutty Sark'** for erection at Footdee.

Ricky and Gavin also cut the plaque for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the launch of the **'Thermopylae'**, in 2018, again free of charge, which is sited in the old bus shelter at the bottom of York Street, Footdee.

*"The staff at Weldtech Services support the role that the maritime industry has played in shaping the North East's past and future and this plaque is gifted to show our gratitude to our forefathers and all the people who remain passionate about promoting our heritage to future generations."* **Ricky Somerville.**

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Some links if you're interested in finding out more.

<https://futureoftheocean.com/stan-bruce>

<https://www.electricscotland.com/history/aberdeen/aberdeenshipbuilding.htm>

<https://electricscotland.com/poetry/banff/story4.htm>

<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/stan-bruce-52043141>

<https://poetrypoem.com/cgi-bin/index.pl?sitename=bardofbanff&item=home>

