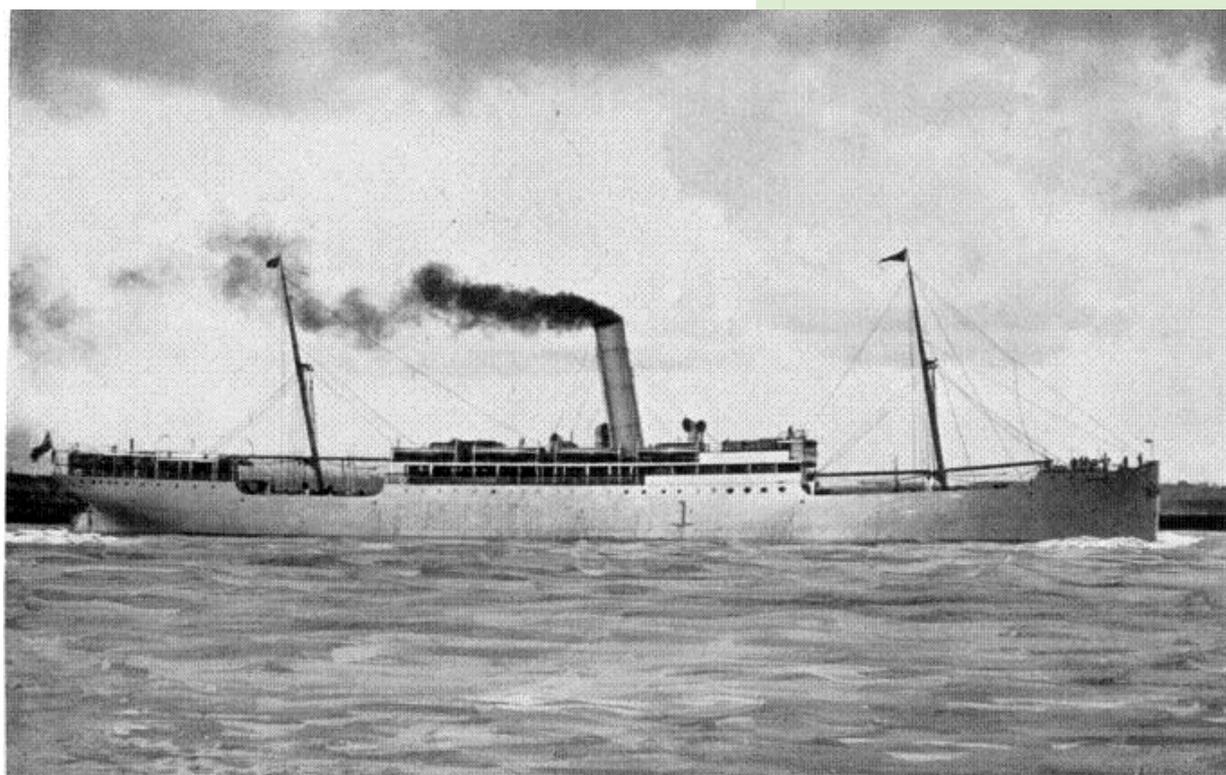




2019-v1.

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



**STANLEY BRUCE**

Due to the age of the photographs, paintings, and drawings in this book they are all considered to be out of copyright, however where the photographer, artist or source of the item is known it has been stated directly below it.

Cover photograph: SS '**Intaba**', heading out of Aberdeen 1910, perhaps on her sea trials, or heading to London. (photographer unknown).

This book has been published as part of a series of books 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 the SS '**Intaba**' available to a wider audience.

If you have any comments regarding this book, or any further information about this ship or anything associated with her, please get in touch, especially if you have any photographs or paintings. 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](mailto:bardofthebroch@yahoo.com)

**If printing this book, it is best printed in A4 or as an A5 booklet.**

## **Foreword**

Aberdeen's association with the sea is now largely based on the oil and gas industry, and prior to that as a major fishing port. Sometimes forgotten is the prominent role which shipbuilding once played in the local economy and society. In this book, Stanley Bruce gives us a detailed account of one of the most notable launches of the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of its launch the **Intaba** was the largest ship, at a length of 387 feet, which had been built in Aberdeen. The construction by Hall, Russell and Company Ltd. from laying the keel to launch in eight and a half months seems remarkable for the time and especially considering that it was also the first to be built in the city using the new "Isherwood System" required to provide the necessary longitudinal strength.

The account of the launch, which was watched by thousands, is interesting in that it didn't all go to plan but aided by a squad of men running on the deck to cause vibration the great hull made it into the water after a short delay. The importance of the event is indicated by the large number of guests invited to the launch and banquet and the large number of speeches and that this was all covered in such detail by the Aberdeen press. The accounts of the speeches make interesting reading give the importance of the trade link with the then newly formed Union of South Africa.

My connection to the story is rather tenuous, the launch was attended by the then 10-year-old Gladys Duthie of the Duthie ship owning family. It is the records of the launch which she kept upon which this book is based. I remember Gladys in her old age when my grandfather, George Bain, and then my father, Len Bain, worked at Duthie family house in Cults. As a young boy, I would sometimes play in a ships cabin which had, for some reason, been relocated from one of their ships to the grounds of their small estate.

***Brian Bain,***

***B.Sc.(Eng.), Ph.D., C.Eng, MSaRS.***

***(Work colleague of Stanley Bruce and son of Len Bain).***

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**2019.**

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

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

**BY  
STANLEY BRUCE**

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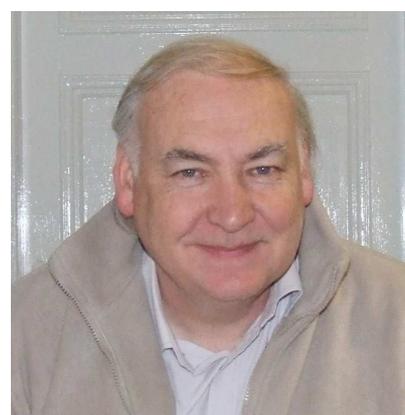
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## Introduction

This book was written after I was given some old papers by Len Bain, Aberdeen. He had kept these safe for 40-years since the death of Gladys Duthie (1900 to 1978) who was a daughter of Aberdeen ship-owner Alexander Duthie (1870 to 1929). Len had formerly worked for Gladys. The newspaper which revealed so much information on the ‘**Intaba**’ and her launch proceedings was the Aberdeen Free Press daily newspaper dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 1910. However, it was not the article on the ‘**Intaba**’ that seemed to be of interest to Gladys (Gladys was only 10-year old at the time), as the article marked, coincidentally on the same page was all about the clipper ship ‘**Port Jackson**’ owned by her father, Alexander Duthie a local prominent ship-owner. I’m guessing here, but I imagine it was her father who had kept the 108-year old page, and it ended up with Gladys after his death. Mr and Mrs Alexander Duthie were both present at the launch of the ‘**Intaba**’. The lengthy article consists of around 7,000 words and gives details of the ship, probably given to the journalist from members of the staff of Hall, Russell and Company, Limited prior to the launch, and it also gives a detailed description of the launch and subsequent proceedings and speeches.



When I worked in Hall Russell Ltd. as an apprentice and a journeyman ship draughtsman, I always went down to see a ship launch. All work usually stopped in the yard at the time of the launch, except for those workers who couldn’t be bothered watching, something I personally could never understand. There was always a buzz in the air on a launch day, and the yard usually packed with visitors, including the invited guests at the launch party, local school children, the workers, and there was usually a band playing. As a ship draughtsman, I stood in the crowd and observed, but later in the role as assistant manager I happily played a part in the launch itself. Preparatory work included ensuring all the steelwork had been signed-off and surveyed by the Classification Society surveyor, checking all the shipside valves were closed, tank docking plugs were fitted, and on the

morning of the launch presenting these to the Classification Society surveyor for a third party sign off. I have been involved under the hull at the time of launch, overseeing the triggers being cut to release the ship, and onboard as she slid down the ways. Once in the water there were teams of men onboard whose task it was to go through all the tanks to make sure there were no leaks. I personally never heard of, or saw any leaks, however the dry-dock was always left flooded and empty on the day of the launch just in case of an emergency. After a ship was launched at Hall Russell Ltd. in the 1980's we usually towed her to the Outfitting Quay. However, in 1910, there was no Outfitting Quay and the '**Intaba**', due to her imminent delivery date, was immediately taken to the sheer legs, situated a little further up the harbour at the east end of Waterloo Quay, to have her engines, heavy machinery, funnel and masts installed. Another task of the day for shipyard workers was gathering all the debris floating around in the harbour after the launch, as these posed a risk to other vessels, so had to be gathered up quickly.

Although I was involved in the launch of several ships at Hall Russell, I have never been to a launch luncheon or dinner. This was reserved for the directors of the company and managers above my level, and I never knew exactly what went on. I was therefore very interested in the very detailed article of the '**Intaba**' launch.

Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. (and the other Aberdeen shipbuilders) since c1890 had been very busy building many herring drifters and trawlers mainly for the local fishing industry, which at the time was booming, basically due to the change from sail to steam. They also built fishing boats for further afield e.g. the trawler '**Kathleen Anderson**' (219 tons) built by Alexander Hall & Co. for the Durban Steam Trawling Company, Port Natal. In 1910, Hall, Russell & Co., as well as the '**Intaba**' launched eleven fishing boats for local and foreign owners. The introduction of the steam engine meant that skippers could sail their boats further away from port, and because they didn't need to rely on the wind, they could swiftly get back to port with their catch ensuring its freshness, making sure they got the best price. '**Intaba**' at 4,832 tons if compared to tonnage, was 50 times bigger than these small fishing boats, and Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. would certainly have wanted to build more large vessels.

According to the Aberdeen Free Press article, there were 313 guests invited to the launch of the '**Intaba**'. This is a lot more than I ever remember seeing during my time at Hall Russell. I can only remember seeing something in the region of 80 to 100 guests. The loft back in 1910 must have been considerably bigger than the loft I remember in the 1980's, as I can't imagine 313 guests plus Hall Russell representatives all fitting inside it.

Hall Russell & Co., Ltd. were pushing the boat out (Excuse the pun) inviting a vast number of guests to the launch. I believe this was simply because they wanted to show that after building mostly fishing boats for the past 20 years, that they could still build big ships, and

they wanted the word to be spread amongst the community and ship-owners that the company was available for business.

I had already chosen the '**Intaba**' to be included in my "The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen – an Introduction" book, as one of the "significant ships" built in Aberdeen. I had selected her because she was at the time of her build the biggest ship built in Aberdeen, and the first ship built in Aberdeen using the "Isherwood System" of construction; Joseph W. Isherwood credited as the designer of this system was also a guest at her launch. Because of the detail in the Aberdeen Free Press article, not only of the ship, but as a general launch-day event I initially thought I would include it in my Introduction book, but due to the length of the article, it would have been too much to include, so I decided to give the '**Intaba**' her own separate book, and here it is, I sincerely hope you find it interesting.

The journalist who wrote the article on the launch of the '**Intaba**' did an amazing job, as he must have done a fair bit of preparatory work by getting the ship details from the staff of Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd.; taken down all what was said in the speeches by shorthand, and then got it all typeset for printing and publication in the following days newspaper, it's a pity the journalists name is not on the article, as I would have liked to mention him. I have however added an appendix with the names of the Aberdeen Free Press workers I could find around the date of the launch.

I believe that there are other photographs in the Aberdeen City Archives that would have been good to add to this book; these being Miss Byron, **Intaba's** engines, **Intaba's** propeller, another launch photo, and possibly photos of the four Rennie ships that I don't have. I made several requests for these to no avail; if you have one of these photographs please get in touch with the e-mail at the front of the book as it's a shame not to have them included.

**Stanley A. Bruce, BSc, I.Eng., I.MarEng., MIMarEST.**

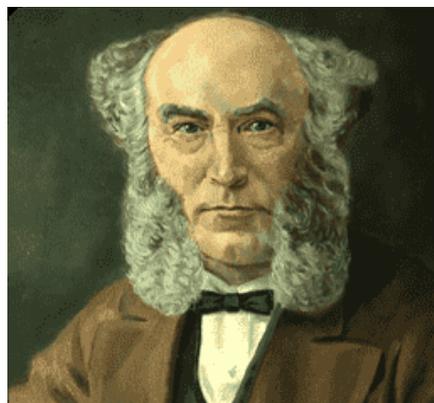
*Former shipbuilder,*

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

## Rennie - Ship-owners.

1836: Alexander Hall & Co., Footdee, Aberdeen, built the 2-masted, hermaphrodite coaster '**Samson**', 120 tons, 69 feet long (21m), for Robert Spring & Co. George Rennie (1823 to 1860) owned 8/64 shares in her.

1845: The Rennie's established themselves as ship-owners in Aberdeen, when John Thomson Rennie (c1825 to 1878), shipping and insurance broker and his older brother George Rennie (1823 to 1860), purchased their first vessel together, a second-hand brig named '**Samson**' (120 tons). George Rennie already owned 8/64 shares in her, so the Rennie's knew this ship well.



*John T. Rennie.  
(Artist unknown).*

1853: Rennie's ships traded to Madagascar.

1856: John T. Rennie was awarded the mail contract from Natal to the Cape when the Natal Colony became a distinct colony in its own-right with its own legislative council. The SS '**Madagascar**' (321 tons) commanded by his brother George Rennie sailed from Natal via Algoa Bay and East London to the Cape. (The '**Madagascar**' was built by John Scott & Co., Carlsdyke, Greenock, Glasgow in 1855, and was wrecked in 1859 at Madagascar).

1858: November: John T. Rennie set up the Aberdeen Clipper Line of Packets, and the first vessel to sail from London to Natal was the 251 ton, iron barque '**L'Imperatrice Eugenie**', which was built by Scott & Co., Greenock in 1854.

1869: John T. Rennie started a joint service with Bullard, King & Co., Ltd., under the banner of the Aberdeen Clipper Line of Packets from London to Natal. The London Company was known as John T. Rennie, Son and Company.

*(Bullard, King & Co., Ltd., was founded in 1850 with a fleet of small sailing ships, which traded from the Thames to ports in the Mediterranean. In 1879, they built their first steamer the SS '**Pongola**' (1,451 tons), and established the Natal Direct Line to carry passengers directly to Durban, South Africa. From 1889 to 1911, the company made sailings from India to South Africa, carrying field labourers to work on the sugar plantations. In 1919, Bullard King & Co., Ltd., was taken over by the Union-Castle Line, but kept its independent identity and colours).*

1869: Rennie bought his first ship from Hall, Russell & Co. (he owned 52/64 shares), she was the 465 ton, 152 feet (46.5m) long, 3-masted ship '**Umvoti**', named after a South

SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910. Stanley Bruce, 2019-v1.

African river. She carried troops in the Anglo-Zulu War (1879). She was well known at South Africa, Mauritius, and Australia. She was broken up in 1928.

1878: John T. Rennie died at his residence, Craigendarroch, Forest Hill, London. There is a gravestone in the Nellfield Cemetery, Aberdeen to him, his wife Isabella nee Abernethy, and three of their sons James, John and George (See Appendix A). His three younger sons John (1858 to 1930), Alexander (b.1856), and David joined their older brother George (1851 to 1927) to continue the business.

1879: The 3-masted barque '**Quathlamba**' (467 tons) was built by Alexander Hall & Co., Footdee, Aberdeen for George Hall Rennie.

*1897, 29<sup>th</sup> September: Hall, Russell & Co. became a limited company.*

1904: Rennie's first vessel above 4,000 tons, the 370 feet (113m) long, SS '**Inanda**' (2) (4,090 tons) built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. joined their fleet.

18<sup>th</sup> November 1910: the '**Intaba**' sailed on her maiden voyage from London to Natal, she was carrying 43 first class passengers, fourteen of them were single women, and according to the Maritzburg College book, No. 145, October 2011 "*Some of them had evocative names Miss Blood, Miss Bliss, Miss Clinch, Miss Money Johnson, and Miss Ironsides*<sup>5</sup>.

## Charente Steamship Co.

In the first half of 1911, only a few months after the completion of the '**Intaba**', John T. Rennie's Aberdeen Direct Line consisting of seven ships and contracts for passenger services to Natal was purchased by Liverpool based Charente Steamship Co. (Thos. & Jas. Harrison), (established in 1853). The ships continued to sail to South Africa as the Harrison-Rennie Line, vessel names beginning with 'In' were retained, six of which were built by Hall, Russell & Co.

### *The seven steamships were:*

<b>Date Built</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Builder</b>	<b>GRT tons</b>	<b>L x B x D (Feet and inches)</b>	<b>Loss</b>
1896	Inyati	Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen.	2,516	310'9" x 40'1" x 25'11"	1915, disappeared at sea, as the ' <b>M Benlliure</b> '.
1897	Ingeli	Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen.	2,928	330'10" x 41'1" x 27'1"	1953, scrapped.
1899	Insizwa	Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen.	2,984	330'5" x 41'1" x 27'2"	1931, scrapped.
1900	Inkonka (Ex Tabaristan)	William. Gray & Co., West Hartlepool.	3,430	368' x 45.1' x 24.2'	1929, scrapped.
1902	Inkosi	Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen.	3,576	350' x 40' x 20' (106.7m x 13.1m x 6.1m)	28 March 1918, torpedoed & lost.
1904	Inanda (2)	Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen.	4,090	370'11" x 46'1" x 29'1"	1932, Scrapped.
1910	Intaba	Hall, Russell & Co., Aberdeen.	4,832	387' x 48'1" x 30'	1953, scrapped.

By 1912: The Thos. & Jas. Harrison fleet comprised of 55 ships, with a collective GRT of a massive 284,000 tons. At this date the company also had a further 29 new ships on order. As far as I can tell, none of these new ships were ordered from Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd or any other Aberdeen shipyard.

May 1921: Rennie was dropped from the company name, ending the 76-years the name was associated with shipping.

## **SS Intaba (1910).**

The following text is based around a lengthy article (in italics) from the Aberdeen Free Press, which gives an extremely detailed account of the launch of the steamer '**Intaba**' on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 1910 by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. Aberdeen, and the subsequent proceedings, mostly speeches given at the launch luncheon in Hall, Russell's loft. It also gives a lot of technical details about the ship, which I presume were given to the journalist by Hall, Russell & Co. staff prior to the launch. I have added text alongside the article, and added photographs / drawings where I felt it appropriate.

SS '**Intaba**' built for Messrs. John T. Rennie & Son, address No. 48 Marischal Street, Aberdeen. (London office address: John T. Rennie, Son & Co., No. 4 East India Avenue, Leadenhall Street).

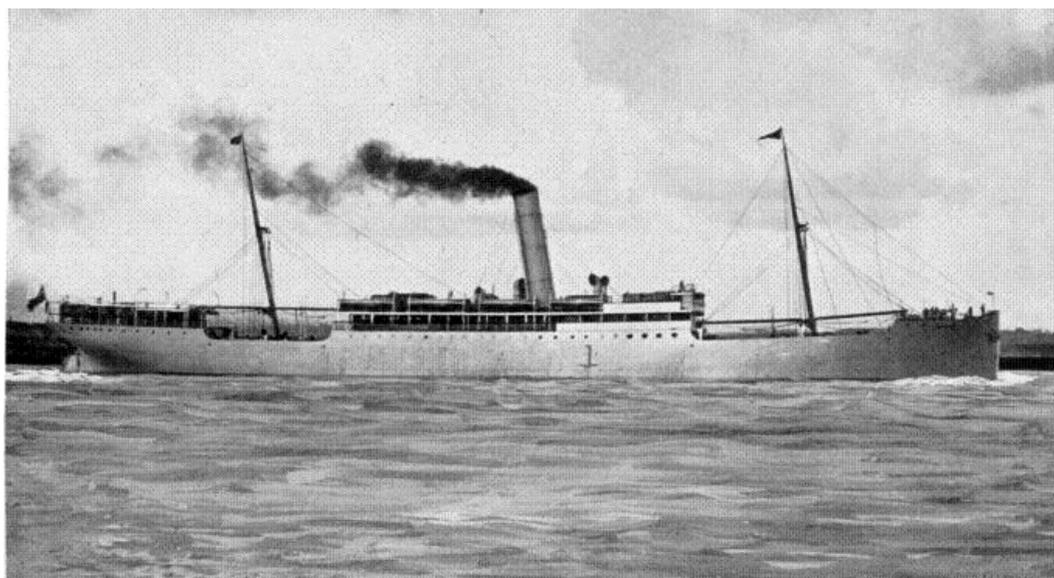
Her build was certainly an accelerated one, as she was built in only 10 months.

She was built to carry cargo and passengers, and could accommodate 70 passengers in first class and 60 passengers in second class.

'**Intaba**' was the 16<sup>th</sup> and last vessel Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. built for Rennie's Aberdeen Line. She sailed for 43 years, which is much longer than would have been expected at the time of her build. She is a testament to her builders and to her owners.

For a ship to have sailed for 43-years, she must have been built of high quality, and maintained to a very high standard.

Intaba in Zulu means 'mountain'.



*The steamer '**Intaba**', built by Hall, Russell and Co., Ltd., Aberdeen, heading out of Aberdeen 1910, perhaps on her sea trials, or heading to London. (photographer unknown).*



*No. 48 Marischal Street, Aberdeen, former offices of J. T. Rennie. (S. Bruce).*

**SS Intaba (1910) continued.**

**She was the first passenger ship built on the east coast of Scotland with the Isherwood System of longitudinal framing.**

**She was at the time of her launch the largest ship built at Aberdeen.**

<b>Ship Name(s)</b>	<b>Intaba.</b> Renamed: ' <b>Waitomo</b> ' (1916), ' <b>Waitoppo</b> ' (1917), and ' <b>Englestan</b> ' (1927). (Pennant No's: Y.1.4 / Y 9.30).
<b>Shipbuilder</b>	<b>Hall, Russell &amp; Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen.</b>
<b>Yard No.</b>	476.
<b>Rig</b>	Steamer, cargo, 64 off 1 <sup>st</sup> class passengers, 58 off 2 <sup>nd</sup> class passengers, and 60 crew. Main and tween decks, poop, long bridge, and topgallant forecastle, and boat deck extending the whole length of the bridge with navigating bridge at fore end, and pilot bridge over.
<b>Engine(s)</b>	Single screw, triple expansion, inverted, surface condensing, direct-acting type, with cylinders 27½ inches (698.5mm), 45½ inches (1,155.7mm), and 75 inches (1,905mm) diameter, and piston stroke of 48 inches, and of 2,849 ihp.
<b>Launch Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> September 1910.
<b>Owner(s)</b> <i>(No of shares held, out of 64 in brackets).</i>	<b>J. T. Rennie &amp; Son (64).</b> Address: No. 48 Marischal Street, Aberdeen. London address: No. 4 East India Avenue, Leadenhall Street.
<b>Registered Port</b>	Aberdeen. Official No. 129345.
<b>GRT</b>	4,832 tons.
<b>Length</b>	386 feet. (117.65m). 401 feet (122.22m) overall.
<b>Breadth</b>	48 feet, 6 inches. (14.78m).
<b>Depth</b>	30 feet, 8 inches. (9.35m).
<b>Construction</b>	Steel, riveted.
<b>Classification</b>	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 100A1.
<b>Other information</b>	Build cost = £80,000 approx. (£70,500 plus extras). October 1910: her build was completed, and she was delivered to J. T. Rennie & Son. For more information see 'History of the Intaba', later in this book.
<b>Date Scrapped / Lost</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> January 1953: she was at Ghent, Belgium, for demolition by shipbreakers Van Heyghen Freres.

## **Aberdeen Free Press, Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 1910.**

### **The Rennie Liner, Launch of the Intaba, Biggest Aberdeen Built Vessel, The Prosperity of South Africa.**

*The SS **Intaba**, built to the order of Messrs. John T. Rennie & Son, for the Aberdeen Direct Line between London and Natal and East Africa, was launched from the yard of Messrs. Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Aberdeen, yesterday afternoon. Representing, it is stated, a value of about £80,000, the vessel stood as the largest built at the port of Aberdeen as regards dimensions and tonnage. The ship was also the first to be built on the east coast of Scotland on the Isherwood system of longitudinal frames, and in many respects the launch was an event of more than ordinary interest and importance in the city. Huge crowds congregated in the vicinity of Messrs. Hall, Russell's yard with the object of seeing the huge craft take the water. Point Law, the North of Scotland wharf, the heights of Torry, and, indeed, every point from which a view of the vessel could be obtained, were thronged with vast assemblages eager to witness the launching ceremony. Unfortunately, the launch was delayed for over half an hour. Miss Byron, daughter of one of the partners of the firm (John Byron), who performed the christening ceremony stood at the bow of the ship, ready to dash on the great mass of iron the bottle of wine which constitutes the recognized method of giving the vessel a name, the order to loosen the fastenings was given and executed in a trice, but still there was no movement on the ways. The great mass of iron and steel on which eight and a half months of arduous toil had been expended would not budge. Hydraulic rams and all other appliances which the builders of ships possess to cope with such emergencies were brought into play. The men on board ran up and down the decks for the purpose of creating vibration, tugs were brought upon the scene, but for over half an hour these efforts were in vain. Suddenly a slight movement was observed, and the cry rang out, "She's off." The motion was scarcely perceptible, but gradually the great ship slid along the ways, and entered the water with stately dignity and impressive spectacular effect. Except for the delay in getting the **Intaba** off, the launch was in every way completely satisfactory. At the conclusion of the ceremony a large and representative company were entertained at a banquet given by the builders. Several toasts were proposed and acknowledged in terms which in point of eloquence are seldom heard at similar functions in the city.*

### **Description of the Vessel.**

*The dimensions of the vessel are as follows: - Length overall, 401 feet; breadth, 48 feet 6 inches; depth, 30 feet 8 inches; and she is about 4,700 tons gross register. She is constructed on the "Isherwood" system of longitudinal framing with two complete decks, poop, long bridge, and topgallant forecastle, and boat deck extending the whole length of the bridge with navigating bridge at fore end, and pilot bridge over. She will class 100 A1 in Lloyds Register, with scantlings and equipment in excess of rules, and has all the requirements to pass the Board of Trade for a passenger certificate. Water Ballast will be carried in the double bottom, and she will be fitted with the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy. Seven steam winches are fitted for working cargo, the hatches, and derrick being arranged for loading and discharging of heavy machinery and especially arranged derrick for lifting a weight of 25 tons. A steam windlass is fitted on the forecastle deck, and steam steering gear is fitted aft, over the rudder-head controlled from the navigating bridge.*

### **Passenger Accommodation.**

*The first-class accommodation is on the upper deck amidships and on the bridge deck. The dining saloon is on the upper deck and is fitted up in St Anns, Bardillo, rough, and Pavanazzo marbles with mahogany furniture upholstered in moquette. There are staterooms, bathrooms, etc., for 68 passengers, the staterooms being fitted with folding iron beds, folding lavatories, chest of drawers, and wardrobe, and sofas upholstered in Terry. On the bridge deck above the dining saloon is the music saloon, which is fitted up in mahogany, satinwood, and inlaid panels, with sofas upholstered in moquette, and piano and writing tables to match. The first-class smoking room is also on the bridge deck, and is fitted up in oak and suitably upholstered. The second-class accommodation is on the upper deck and on the poop deck. The dining saloon is on the upper deck, and is fitted up in mahogany, teak, and maple. There are staterooms having folding iron beds, folding lavatories etc. On the poop deck is the second class ladies room, with piano to match fittings, and a smoking room.*

## **The Crew's Quarters.**

*The captain's room officers' room, chart room, and wheelhouse are at the fore end of the boat deck, and the engineers are accommodated in a house at the after end of the boat deck, both having bathroom and lavatories adjoining. On the upper deck are rooms for the doctor, dispensary, purser, and a stewardess, and a large children's playroom, also pantries, galley bake-house, butcher's shop, etc. The stewards and cooks are berthed aft, and the seamen and firemen in the topgallant forecastle, each with baths and lavatories adjoining. Special attention has been given to ventilation throughout the whole ship. There are two cold chambers fitted in the tween decks, one for cargo and one for provisions, which are cooled by one of Messrs. J. and E. Hall's refrigerators. The vessel will be supplied with two of Lord Kelvin's compasses and a sounding machine. A complete installation of electric light and bells is being fitted up by Messrs. Claud Hamilton, Aberdeen, Limited, the generating plant consists of three different circuits. All the floors in the living accommodation are covered with terrano jointless decking in place of wood.*



## **Claud Hamilton, (Aberdeen), Ltd., Electrical, Motor-car, & Power Engineers.**

Address: 243 Union Street, and 40 to 44 Union Row, Aberdeen.

They installed the electric lighting, bells, and telephones on board the 'Intaba'. They were established in Glasgow in 1880 as Norman & Son. Claud Hamilton (1864 to 1919) born in Glasgow, but educated at Aberdeen Grammar School was a manager and later a partner in Norman & Son, Glasgow, and took over as Managing Director in 1898. The firm entered the

growing motor industry in 1904, and they continued in business as a car mechanics garage in Glasgow, and in Aberdeen, until the 1960s. Claud Hamilton 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1890 was married to Jeannie Lumsden, younger daughter of John T. Rennie, ship-owner of Aberdeen.

### **HAMILTON**

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GENERAL DIRECTORY.

**Hamilton, Claud (Aberdeen), Ltd., electrical, motor-car, and power engineers; general office, electric light show-rooms, and motor-car depot, 254 Union street. Telephone No. 582. Works and garage for 100 cars, open day and night, Sunday included, 40 to 44 Union row. Telephone No. 880**

*1909 to 1910 Aberdeen Post Office Directory entry.*

In 1909, Claud Hamilton completed the installation of electric lighting, heating, bells and telephones in King Edward VII's new yacht, the Royal Yacht '**Alexandra**' built by A. and J. Inglis, Glasgow. They did similar work on the turbine yacht '**Vanadis**' in 1908, also built by A. and J. Inglis. In 1908, they did similar work on the luxury Steam Yacht '**Liberty**' built by Ramage and Ferguson, Leith.

### **The Engines.**

*The propelling engines are of the triple expansion surface condensing, direct-acting type, with cylinders 27½ inches, 45½ inches, and 75 inches diameter, and piston stroke of 48 inches, and of 3000 horse-power. The crank shaft is of three-throw type, in three pieces, interchangeable and reversible, and coupled through ingot steel shafting to a built propeller with four bronze blades of large surface. The condenser is a Weir's uniflux condenser constructed of steel by the builders, and this is among the first engines in the mercantile marine to be fitted with this type of condenser. The air, circulating, feed, bilge, and sanitary pumps are all worked by levers off the main engines. Separate engines are fitted for reversing and turning, and a Dunlop governor is fitted to prevent the main engines racing. The steam generating plant consists of six cylindrical multitubular boilers of ample capacity to keep the engines going at full power under all conditions. There are two stokeholds, three boilers being fired from each, and the waste gases are laid up to one common funnel, 10 feet 6 inches in diameter. Two See's ash ejectors discharge the ashes direct from the stokehold floor overboard. The auxiliary machinery includes Weir's feed pump, ballast pump, deck service pump, fresh water pump, ash ejector pump, evaporator, filter, feed water heater, and a distiller. The exhaust steam from all auxiliary engines and deck machinery is led to a separate auxiliary contraflow condenser, thus saving all the fresh water possible. This condenser is supplied with an independent engine for circulating the water through it. In the arrangement of auxiliary machinery special attention has been given to the safety and comfort of the passengers, to the rapid discharging of the cargo, and to the easy and quick handling of the vessel.*

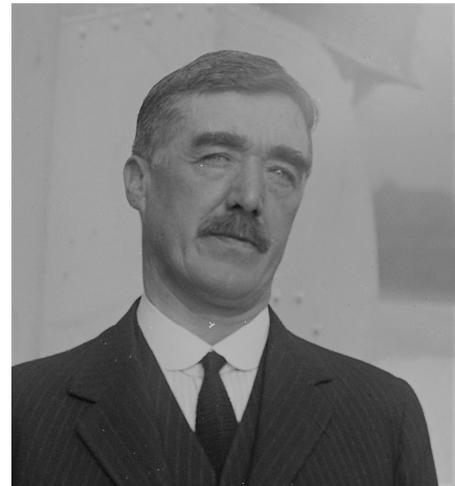
### **The Isherwood System.**

*As already mentioned, the **Intaba** is constructed in the "Isherwood" system. She is the first vessel built at Aberdeen on this system to have a Board of Trade passenger certificate. In the "Isherwood" system of construction, the transverse frames and beams are fitted at widely spaced intervals. These structures form complete transverse belts around the ship. They are directly riveted to the shell plating and deck of the vessel. These strong, transverse, girder frames are slotted around their outer edges, in order to admit, of*

*continuous longitudinal stiffeners being fitted, not only at the decks, but on the sides, bottom, and tank top. The fitting of these longitudinal stiffeners directly onto the plating prevents damage to the decks through buckling, which has been sustained in vessels of the ordinary construction which have had no fore and aft support to the plating in between the transverse beams, and provides a double bottom construction, which is more ready of access than one built of the ordinary system. It gives greatly increased longitudinal strength, increased capacity for bale goods and for bulky cargoes on account of the floor being carried flat to the side of the vessel, increased deadweight carrying capacity without increasing the draft of the vessel, reduction of vibration owing to the continuous fore and aft support given to the plating of the structure, improved ventilations, owing to the longitudinals forming fore and aft air courses thus preventing sweating and damage to grain either in bags or in bulk, and reduced cost of maintenance due to all parts of the structure being readily accessible. The construction of the hull and fitting has been under the supervision of Captain Charles Stuart, R.N.R., marine superintendent to the owners, and the machinery under that of Mr Johnston of Messrs. Flannery, Baggallay and Johnson Ltd., consulting engineers, London. The **Intaba** is to be commanded by Captain Wathing, with Mr George Young as chief engineer, who have recently left the owners SS '**Inanda**' (Built by Hall Russell in 1904) to join the new vessel.*

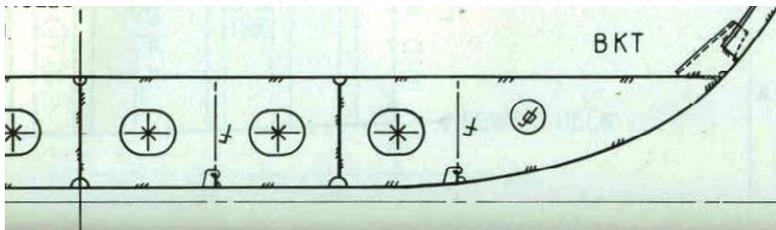
## Isherwood System.

The Isherwood System was invented in 1906 by British naval architect Joseph Isherwood (1870 to 1937) of Hartlepool. This system is a method of ship construction which uses light closely spaced longitudinal stiffeners, and more widely spaced frames as compared to a conventional ship of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The use of the longitudinal stiffeners gave the ships much greater longitudinal strength and enabled longer ships to be built. In recognition of the importance of his system he was created Baronet of Raggleswood, in the 1921 Birthday Honours of King George V. Regarding the use of the Isherwood System of construction, it was George Hall Rennie (1851 to 1927) who asked Hall, Russell and Co., Ltd. to build the 'Intaba' to this design.



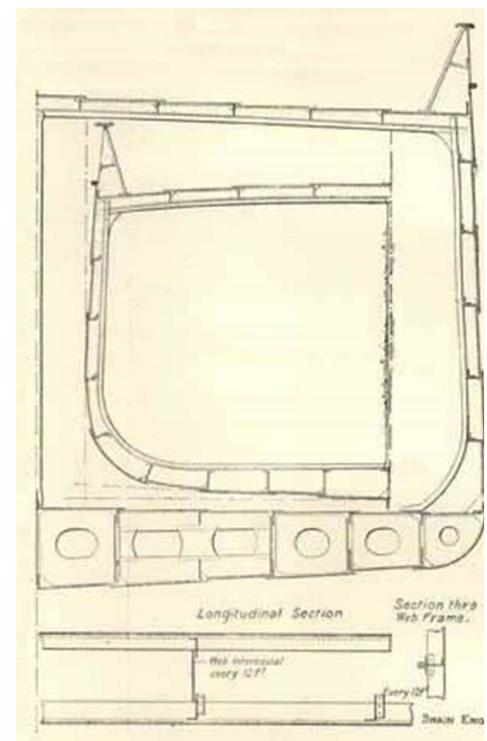
Joseph Isherwood. (Photo by George Grantham Bain).

The ships I worked on at Hall Russell from 1980 to 1991, had longitudinal stiffening on their hull bottom, but otherwise were of conventional ship construction.



Part of a half section through Hall Russell's mooring and salvage vessel, Hall Russell ship No's 993 to 995, showing longitudinal stiffeners on the hull bottom, as drawn by the author in 1983, as a third-year apprentice.

During my research regarding longitudinal ship framing, I came across an article in 'The Engineer' page 347, dated 27<sup>th</sup> April 1894, which shows drawings titled Messrs. Croom & Arthur's System of Longitudinal Shipbuilding. This is dated 12-years before Joseph Isherwood's design of 1906.

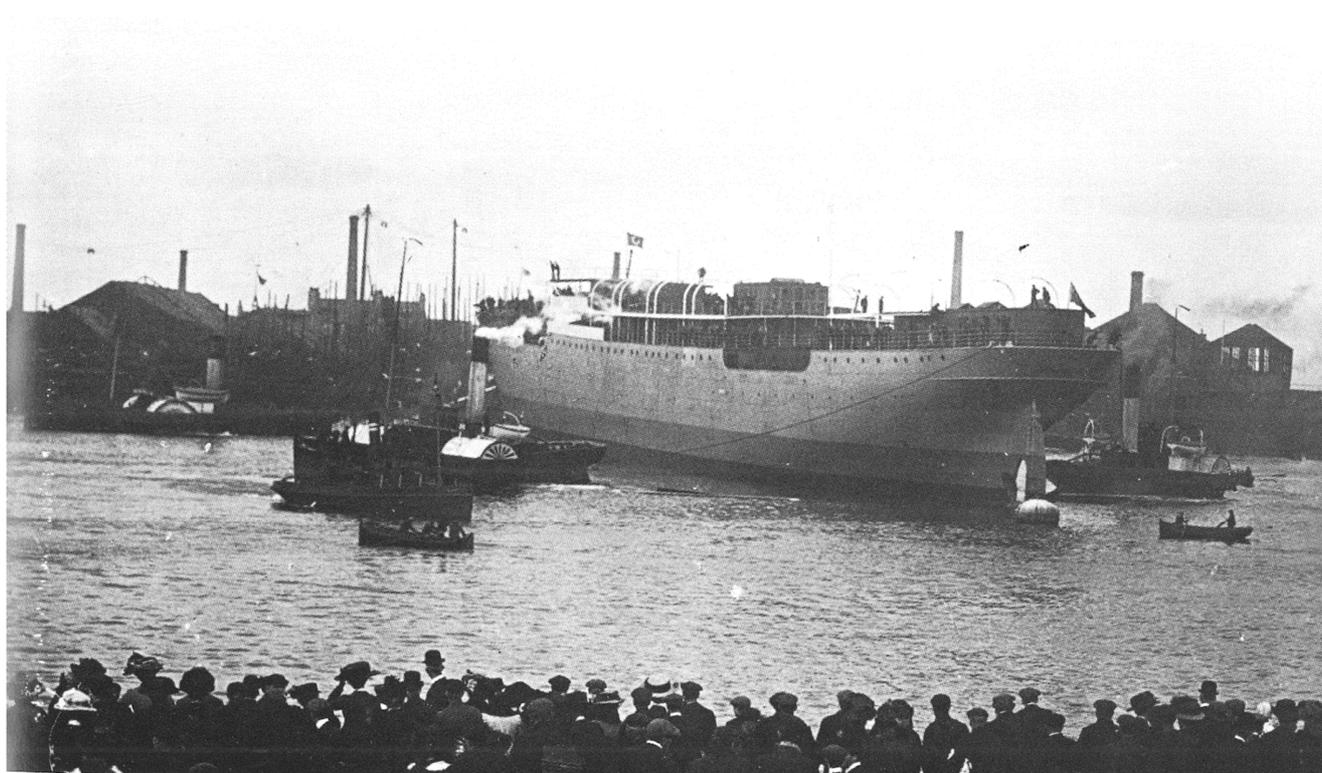


Croom & Arthur's System (1894).

## **The Launching Ceremony.**

*The extraordinary interest manifested in the building of the **Intaba** was specially apparent yesterday, when all points from which the launch could be viewed were crowded. In the spacious yard of the builders, the invited guests began to arrive early, in order to obtain a good view of the great vessel, representing a tonnage of 4700 tons (4,832 tons), and a value of about £80,000. As the hour for launching approached, hundreds flocked to the yard. Business and professional men were numerous, and the light summer dresses of the ladies, who formed a large proportion of the spectators, added picturesqueness to a scene of much animation. There was a strange contrast between the behavior of those who had come specially to witness the launch, and of the hundreds of workmen who passed to and for in the discharge of their duties. The former appeared as if their interest in the ship would never be satisfied, while the latter conveyed the impression that they were anxious to see the vessel safely in the water, and their months of labour crowned with success. A raised platform was built at the bow of the vessel, and here miss Byron, a daughter of one of the partners of the firm Messrs. J. T. Rennie & Son, who had the honour of christening the vessel, along with representatives of both the owners and the builders, and numerous invited guests, took up their position. When the hour for performing the ceremony arrived there was a visible heightening of interest in the great event of the day. People flocked to the barricades which guarded the ship's side, and everyone was on the tiptoe of excitement. While many were eager to witness what was taking place at the bow of the ship, others seemed more concerned about the manner in which she would take the water. Thus was interest divided, and the huge assemblage was distributed along the entire length of the great vessel. On the bottle of wine suspended from the ship's side by red, white, and blue ribbons was a beautiful bunch of white heather, and many on the platform appeared anxious to secure a sprig, or a piece of the ribbon, as a souvenir of an eventful occasion. A whistle was the order to launch, and the fastenings were severed, but the great ship did not move. The situation was unfortunate, and general sympathy was expressed for the builders. Those in charge of the operations, however did not seem to view the matter in a serious light, and entertained and entertained no doubt that the steamer would very soon slip into the water. Of course, emergencies and contingencies had been provided for. Hydraulic screw jacks were at once available, and other steps taken to move the vessel. The men at the ways worked with a will, but for a time their efforts were unsuccessful. A large number of men were put on board the vessel and were kept running backward and foreword in order to cause vibration, and at a quarter past 3 the creaking of the fastenings gave evidence that at last the vessel would soon be on its way, and the shout was raised. "She's off." At first there was only slight movement, but in a moment the **Intaba** was off down the ways towards the channel. Miss Byron performed her part of the ceremony with much gracefulness, and the send-off to the vessel was of the most enthusiastic description.*

*The crowd on the ship and in the yard cheered to the utmost of their power. The mob lining the quays opposite the yard cheered heartily in the demonstration, and everywhere there was genuine satisfaction that all difficulties had been overcome and that the **Intaba** was safe. The crowd in the vicinity of the yard numbered thousands and there was a great number on the heights of Torry, which commanded an excellent view of all that was going on. At Point Law the scene was one of greatest enthusiasm. Crowds numbering several thousands were gathered on the quayside, while hundreds of spectators had installed themselves on the roofs of curing factories, offices, and even the roof of the sale ring was not without its bevy of spectators. As the **Intaba** left the ways a cheer went up from the assembled thousands, and once the boat (ship) was properly afloat the crowd quietly dispersed.*



*Edwardian postcard showing the launch of the '**Intaba**', 6<sup>th</sup> September 1910 at Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., Footdee, Aberdeen. (Note the crowd on the Torry side of the harbour in the foreground, and the three steam-driven harbour tugs; two off paddle driven).*

*The order for the vessel was given to the builders on Christmas Day last year, and the vessel will be ready to leave the port about November 1<sup>st</sup>. The entire work has thus occupied about ten months, which in rapidity of construction is a record for the port.*

*The builders were insured against any accident in launching the vessel. The grease with which the "ways" were plentiful coated had become caked or crusted in some way, and this was the reason why the vessel did not move when she ought to have done. This was borne*

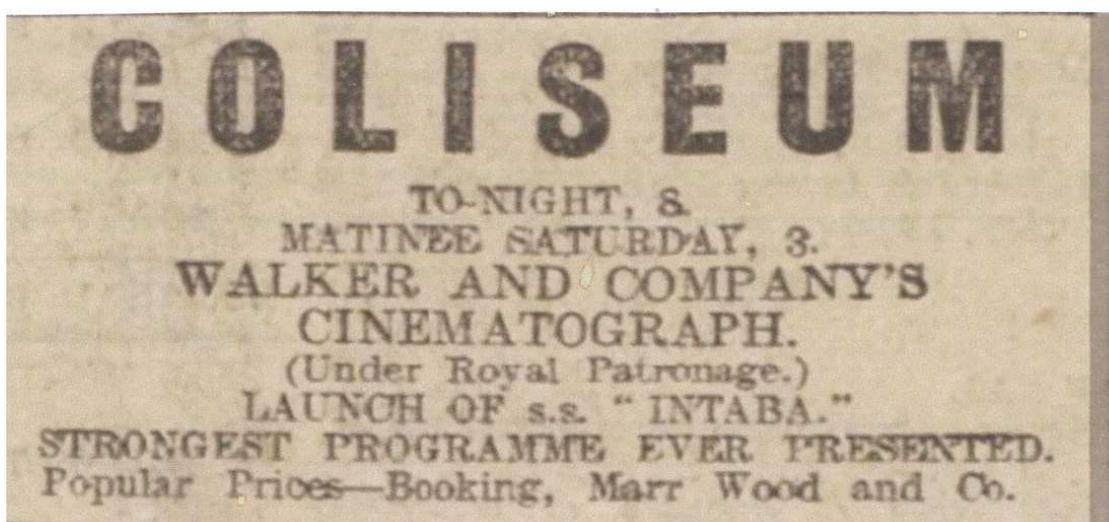
SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910.

Stanley Bruce, 2019-v1.

*out by the almost imperceptible movement at first, which was a cause of still further anxiety.*

*The last occasion that a hitch occurred at the launch of a big vessel was about eleven years ago, when the ~~trawler~~ (liner) 'Insizwa' left the slips for the same firm; Messrs. Walker and Company took cinematograph pictures of the launch. It would be interesting to see this footage if it still exists.*

William Walker was also present at the launch of the 'Intaba' and filmed the launch, which was shown in his cinema on the 8<sup>th</sup> September, the day after the launch.



*Coliseum Cinema advert from the Aberdeen Daily Journal dated 8<sup>th</sup> September 1910.*

The Coliseum Cinema with seats for 1,400 was located at No. 49 Belmont Street in a former Trades Hall built in 1896. It was opened on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1910 by William Walker. Since October 2000 this is known as the Belmont Cinema.

## **The Launch**

She stands,  
Like a giant amongst ants,  
As they move to and fro,  
To the builder's dance,  
But, when the triggers are cut,  
She makes her move,  
And there's singing in my heart,  
Like a needle making music, in a records groove.

The surge of the water,  
As the launch crowd cheers,  
The screech from her drag chains,  
Is music to my ears.  
In the water, she's silent,  
But my heart is pounding,  
The scene I have witnessed,  
Is nothing less, than outstanding.

***Stanley Bruce,***  
***15<sup>th</sup> September 2018.***

## **The Luncheon.**

*At the completion of the launching ceremony the builders entertained a large company to cake and wine. The banquet was held in the model loft, which had been tastefully draped in red and white, the flag of the line, and a banner bearing the name **Intaba** being a prominent object in the scheme. Mr A. Hall Wilson presided, and amongst those who accepted invitations to be present were: - Mr G. Hall Rennie, Mr and Mrs A. H. Rennie and miss Rennie, Mr and Mrs D. W. Rennie, Mr and Mrs E. G. Rennie, Mr and Miss Byron of Messrs. John T. Rennie and Son; Mr James Y. Hunter, Mr James H. Anderson, Mr Francis Coutts, of Messrs. Hall, Russell, and Co., Ltd.; Lord Provost Wilson and Mrs Wilson; Mr and Mrs Abercromby; Mr D. W. Abernethy and Misses Abernethy; Mr and Mrs A. B. Abernethy; Mr and Mrs Thomas Adam of Denmore; Mr T. L. Adam; Mr and Mrs A. C. Adam, Mr J. G. Adam; Mr W. D. Adam; Mr G. S. Adams; Mr W. R. Aiken; Baillie and Mrs Allan; Mr David Anderson; Mr William Anderson; Mr James Angus; Mr W. M. Brechin; Mr and Mrs James Boyd and Miss Boyd, London; Baillie and Mrs Barron; Mr John Brown, Aberdeen Steam Trawling and Fishing Co.; Mr John Brown, jun.; Mr Hugh Barr, assistant harbour engineer; Mr Barnet, Board of Trade, and Mrs Barnet; Mr Barter, Board of Trade, and Mrs Barter; Mr and Mrs George Bisset, Mr and Mrs P. Beveridge, Mr L. W. Butcher, Mr and Mrs G. M. Cook; Mr and Mrs James Cook; Mr W. L. Cook; Mr J. Y. Collie and Miss Collie; Mr and Mrs Theodore Crombie of Culter; Mr John Crombie; Mr G. T. Crombie, Mr Crewsdon, Ballater; Mr R. D. Clark, Natal; Mr and Mrs John Coutts; Mr, Mrs and Miss Clulow; Captain Crombie, harbourmaster; Mr and Mrs A. T. Cruickshank; Mr George Catto; Mr John Crombie of Messrs. John Crombie and Sons; Mr William Crombie, do; Mr H. W. Curchin, Middlesborough; Mrs Patrick Cooper, Mr George Davidson of Wellwood; Mr James Cameron (Hall, Russell and Co.); Major Duncan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Scots; Messrs. Robert Duncan, Thomas Davidson, Arthur Davidson, Alexander Davidson, Mr and Mrs David Davidson, Mr James Davidson, sen.; Mr James Davidson jun.; Mr and Mrs Alexander Duthie, Mr and Mrs M. M. Duncan; Mr James W. Davidson, town clerk depute; Mr and Mrs Arthur Duncan; Lieutenant Errington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Scots; Mr Alexander Forbes; Mr and Mrs Fimister; Mr G. C. Fimister; Mr and Mrs Thomas Fergusson; Mr Ridley Fowell, Lloyds surveyor, and Mrs Ridley Fowell; Sir John and Lady Fleming; Mr Frank Fleming; Mr and Mrs C. Lyall Grant, Mr John Lyall Grant; Mr and Mrs W. S. Gill; Mr and Mrs Fellowes Gordon, Scotstown; Miss Garden, Mr William A. Gray; Mr and Mrs Henry J. Gray; Dr Gordon, town clerk, and Mrs William Gordon; Captain Girdlesbone, Captain Grimmer, Mr John Graham, Mr and Mrs Claud Hamilton, Glasgow; Mr and Mrs H. A. Holmes, Miss Hunter; Mr Stephen Hunter, (Manager) Northern Agricultural Company; Mr Thomas Irvin; Mr J. W. Isherwood, Middlesborough; Mr and Mrs F. Jolly; Mr A. B. Johnson, of Messrs. Flannery, Baggallay, and Johnson, London; Mr and Mrs Alexander Johnston; Mr and Mrs Jackson, Thorngrove; Mr Keiller, Ballater; Baillie Kemp; Mr J. W. King; Mr W. D. Kirkwood, Mr and Mrs John Lumsden, Ballater; Mr &*

*Mrs William Leslie, Fairgirth, Milltimber, Mr J. Ledingham and Miss Ledingham, Rev. J. Loutit, Manse of Foveran: Dr and Mrs Littlejohn, Mr and Mrs Alexander Latto, Mr and Mrs James Leith, Mr and Mrs Charles A. Lindsay, Mr and Mrs Robert Laing, Mr Andrew Lewis, Mr James Laing, Mr James E. Lawie, Mr Thomas Lamb, Captain and Mrs Laird, H.M.S. Clyde; Captain Taylor, ss City of London; Sir Alexander and Lady Lyon, Mr W. Littlejohn, Mr W. Y. Macdonald and Miss Macdonald, Union Bank; Mr W. Maxwell, Mr Charles Merrylees, North of Scotland and Orkney and Shetland Steam Navigation Company; Mr and Mrs D. M. M. Milligan, Mr W. Todd Moffatt, Mr H. R. Mitchell, London; Mrs Michie, Mr A. T. McRobert, (Manager) Aberdeen Lime Company; Mr L. MacKinnon, Mr David Morgan, Mr John McQuharne, Dean of Guild Murray, Treasurer and Mrs William Meff, Mr and Mrs Alexander Milne. Mr and Mrs John Mortimer, Ex-Lord Provost Mearns, Mr John McIntyre, Mr J. C. Rennie, Mr John Main, Captain Mack, Mr Alexander Marr, Dr and Mrs James Mearns, Dr and Mrs Marshall Mackenzie and Miss Mackenzie, Mr J. E. MacQueen, Dr and Mrs T. C. Mackenzie, Inverness; Mr A. M. Munro, City Chamberlain, and Mrs Munro, Mr Adam Maitland, Mr and Mrs George McBain, Mr John Nicol and Miss Nicol, London; Mrs and Mr Napier, Stonehaven; Mr R. Gordon Nicol, C.E., harbour engineer, and Mrs Gordon Nicol, Mr and Mrs Newton, Mr Wallace Nutten, Mr A. G. Ogston, Heathpark; Mr Wm. Panton, Mr James Pirie, Mr and Mrs George Pyper, Mr F. J. Perrott, of Messrs. Day, Summers and Co., Southampton; Miss Rennie, Mr Victor Robinson, London; Lieutenant Robertson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Scots; Mrs Ross, Ballater; Baillie and Mrs Robertson, Mr J. M. Rose, Mr and Mrs James A. Ross, Mr Duncan Rennie, Mr James Reid, Mr Alexander Riddell, jun., Mr J. Everard Rae, Mr and Mrs John Rust, Mr and Mrs John Riddell, Mr and Mrs John Rust, Benholm Castle; Mr and Mrs John Sangster, Mr William Reid, Mr W. Skirving, Aberdeen, Newcastle, and Hull Steamship Company; Mr and Mrs John Spencer, Mr and Mrs H. H. Smith, Ballater; Mr Thomas Stephen, London; Mr F. R. Sinclair; Mr and Mrs Spalding, Miss Stewart, Dinnet; Mrs George Stuart, Ballater; Miss Eva Spencer, Mr and Mrs Alexander Stephen, Mr and Mrs William Scorgie, Messrs. Andrew Smith, Thomas Stephen, Alexander Stirrat, Stormont, George J, Shepherd, James Spence, National Bank; James Scott, senior; J. Scott, jun.; Mr and Mrs J. C. Thom, Crathes; Mr and Mrs Taggart, Mr J. B. Taylor, Mr and Mrs Todd, Mr, Mrs, and Misses Williams, Park House; Mr and Mrs J. A. Wood, Mr R. Wood, Mr A. Watson, Captain and Mrs Watling, Mr E. W. Watt, Mr William Watt, Mr John Wilson, Pitfodels; Mr and Mrs Webster, Brechin; Mr and Mrs Alexander Wilson, Mr and Mrs Alexander Wilkie, Mr and Mrs John Wallace, Mr Andrew Walker, Captain Wetherly, Mr William Walker, senior; Mr and Mrs G. Watt, Bielside; Mr and Mrs A. B. Whyte, Murtle; Mr G. N. Wyllie, Mr and Mrs George Young, (Chief Engineer) and the Misses Young, Mr Alexander B. Young.*

## Some of the Guests.

The huge guest list (313 names) has names from a wide spectrum of society. It includes ship-owners, several lord provosts, and many prominent local business men, I guess invited by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. to show off their latest and biggest ship. They were certainly pushing the boat out. Amongst the guests invited by the owners were Mr Robert Clark M.A., headmaster of the college in Natal, and Mr John Nicol C.M.G., former mayor of Durban.

Some of the guests of interest I noted (underlined above), are as follows:

### Mr and Mrs Abercromby.

Andrew Abercromby (1869 to 1946), ship-owner, Aberdeen, and his wife Jeannie Wood (1873 to 1952). Both buried in the Allenvale Cemetery, Aberdeen.

He had the following ships built at Hall, Russell & Co. before 1910:

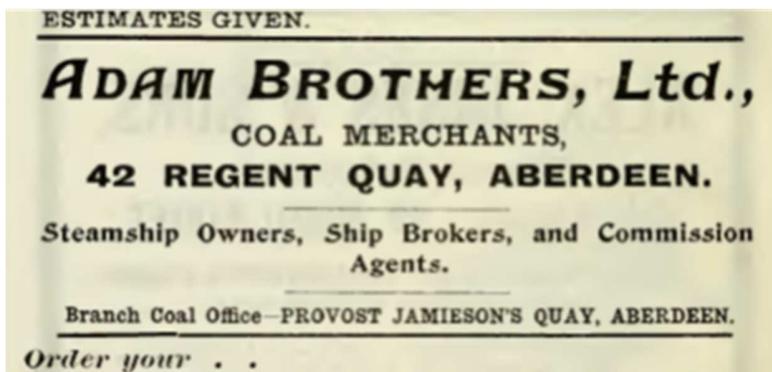
Ship Type	Date Built	Name	Yard No	Tons
Collier	1908	Firth	455	405
Steamer / Cargo	1909	Ferryhill	470	411

### Mr and Mrs Thomas Adam of Denmore.

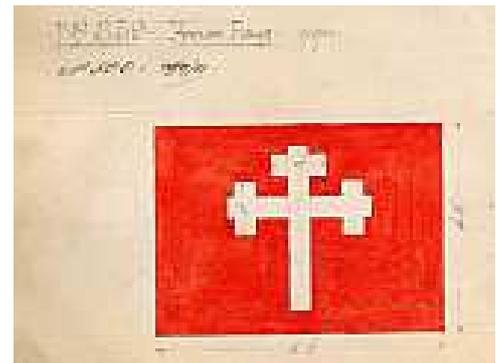
Thomas Adam (1842 to 1919) was an Aberdeen ship-owner who from c1885 owned the Denmore Estate, and lived in Denmore House (demolished in 1977) north of the city. His wife was Elizabeth Livingston (b.1853). His son and heir Thomas Livingston Adam (1880 to 1959) who lived at Kaim House, near Cults, inherited the family business, but it was liquidated in 1920.

Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. prior to 1911, built the following ships for the Adam's:

Ship Type	Date Built	Name	Yard No	Tons
Steamer / Cargo	1870	Thomas Adam	172	886
Steamer / Cargo	1877	Spey	207	280
Steamer / Cargo	1880	Auchintoul	216	1,637
Steamer / Cargo	1880	Ardoe	218	1,388
Steamer / Cargo	1883	Aberdour	229	1,519
Steamer / Cargo	1884	Ardmellie	234	1,518
Steamer / Cargo	1889	Alford	250	1,899
Steamer / Cargo	1902	Aberlour	359	4,194
Collier	1911	Aberdon	500	1,005



*Adam Brothers, Ltd., (Advert in the 1909 to 1910 Aberdeen Post Office Directory).*



*Adam Brothers House Flag, drawn for the 'Aberlour'. (Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd.).*

1887: Alexander Hall & Co. built the steam tug 'Mary' (30 tons) for Thomas Adam Junior.

### **Mr Robert Douglas Clark, M.A.**

Robert D. Clark was born in Benholm, Kincardineshire, Scotland, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1846. He was educated at Oxford University and gained a MA. From 1879 to 1902 he was the headmaster of Maritzburg College, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (Founded in 1863 as the Pietermaritzburg High School). He is often referred to as 'The Father of College' and part of the college is named "Clark House" in his honour. This building carries the KwaZulu-Natal provincial heritage authorities seal certifying it as a heritage landmark.



*Mr Robert D. Clark, MA. (Maritzburg College).*

**Davidson – Ship-owners. (8 guests).**

Thomas Davidson, Arthur Davidson, Alexander Davidson, Mr and Mrs David Davidson, Mr James Davidson Senior, Mr James Davidson Junior, and Mr George Davidson JP of Wellwood were all guests at the launch. There is a simple explanation why Hall Russell & Co., Ltd. built so many ships for J. & A. Davidson, Aberdeen (Founded in 1865), this was because Thomas Russell (c1821 to 1886) former co-owner of Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. was also a partner in the company of J. & A. Davidson from c1870 to c1882<sup>6</sup>.

Hall, Russell & Co. prior to 1910, built the following ships for Davidson owners:

Date	Name	Yard No	Tons	Ship Type	Aberdeen Owners
1871	Bon-Accord	177	469	Steamer / Cargo / Collier	J. & A. Davidson.
1874	Ben Macdui	190	592	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1875	Ben Avon	195	632	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1875	Braemar	196	725	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1876	Ballater	199	780	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1877	Banchory	204	372	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1878	Balmoral	209	979	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1878	Benamain	210	381	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1878	Birkhall	211	1447	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1879	Ballogie	214	1004	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1880	Ballochbuie	220	677	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1881	Benabourd	221	680	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1882	Balgairn	226	2577	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1883	Balnacraig	228	1629	Steamer / Cargo	J. & A. Davidson.
1884	Dee	235	472	Steamer / Cargo	G. & W. Davidson.
1906	Rainbow	402	176	Steam Trawler	Thomas Davidson.

***Other Aberdeen ships built for Davidson owners:***

**‘Balgownie’** steamer was built in 1880 by Alexander Hall & Co. for J. & A. Davidson, Aberdeen.

**‘Don’** steamer was built in 1883 by John Duthie & Sons, with engines by Hall, Russell & Co. for George Davidson, Aberdeen.

**‘Bonaccord’** steamer was built in 1889 by Alexander Hall & Co. for G. & W. Davidson, Aberdeen.

***Also:***

The **‘Benalder’** was built as the **‘Thomas Adam’** by Hall, Russell & Co. for Adam & Company, Aberdeen in 1870, but was bought by J. & A. Davidson in 1888/9 and renamed.

### Mr and Mrs Alexander Duthie.

Alexander Duthie (1870 to 1929) was a prominent ship-owner in Aberdeen. In 1897, he married Mary Hunter (1870 to 1959). As far as I can tell Hall, Russell & Co., never built any ships for his company, however Alexander Hall & Co. certainly did, i.e. in 1882, the iron-hulled, 4-masted barque **'Port Jackson'** (2,212 tons). Basil Lubbock in his book 'The Colonial Clippers' described her as "...one of the most beautiful iron ships ever built".

### Sir John Fleming and Lady Fleming.

John Fleming was born in Dundee in 1847. He established a timber merchant business in Baltic Place, Aberdeen. His wife was Lady Fleming (c1849 to 1932). He was Lord Provost of Aberdeen from 1898 to 1902, and he was the first Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeen. He died in 1925. Even though the hull of the **'Intaba'** was made of iron, she still had a lot of timber, such as oak, mahogany, teak, satinwood and maple, which was probably bought from Fleming's, which conveniently was just along the street in Baltic Place. Fleming's relocated to a new site at Silverburn Place, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, which is now Buildbase, and sells all sorts of building products not just timber.



*Sir John Fleming, painted by Robert Brough (1872 to 1905).*

The following ships were built in Aberdeen for Fleming / Fleming & Co.:

Ship Type	Date Built	Name	Builder	Yard No	Tons
Steamer / Cargo	1881	Glen Gelder	Alexander Hall & Co. Engines by Hall, Russell & Co.	304	746
Steamer / Cargo	1882	Glen Tilt	Alexander Hall & Co.	312	453
Steam Trawler	1884	Gleneagles	Hall, Russell & Co.	238	207

## **Sir Alexander and Lady Lyon.**

Sir Alexander Lyon (1850 to 1926) was a director of a several important local businesses. He served as Lord Provost of Aberdeen from 1905 to 1908. He was knighted in 1906. He was a deputy-lieutenant of Aberdeen and a justice of the Peace (JP). He was president of the Aberdeen Territorial Army Association, and a prominent office bearer in the Aberdeen Seven Incorporated Trades.



*Sir Alexander Lyon, dressed  
as Lord Lieutenant of  
Aberdeen.  
(Photographer unknown).*

## **Mr & Mrs William Leslie, Fairgirth, Milltimber.**

William Leslie was a prominent Aberdeen ship-owner with offices at No. 59 Marischal Street, Aberdeen; he was also referred to as shipbrokers, herring exporters, insurance brokers, and commission agents.

The company office was also the office of the Foreign Consul for Chile, and France.

The Scottish Herring Import and Export Co., Ltd., was also registered at this office.

For more information please read one of my other books titled: 'LESLIE: Ship-owners, Shipmasters, & Shipbuilders of Aberdeen (An Introduction)' (2018), available to download for free at 'The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen' webpage on [www.electricscotland.com](http://www.electricscotland.com)

## **Mr Andrew Lewis.**

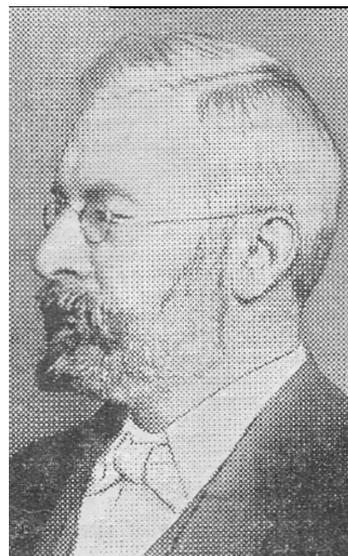
Andrew Lewis took over the family business of John Lewis & Sons Ltd., Point Law, Aberdeen in 1907 when his father died. In 1910, their business was marine engineering and ship-repair, and they built wooden boats and fitted out trawler hulls built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd.

In 1909, Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. built a trawler named '**John E. Lewis**' (254 tons).

Due to WW1, in 1917 John Lewis & Sons, Torry built their first vessel a short-sea trader or collier '**Wyndhurst**' (573 tons), the yard manager was Wilfred Ayre. 3-months after her completion the '**Wyndhurst**' was torpedoed and sank, 11 crew were lost, and 3 survived. After WW1, John Lewis & Sons became a competitor of Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd.

## **Adam Maitland, Slate Merchant & Ship-owner.**

He was the first president of the Aberdeen Y.M.C.A. *“The value to the Association of his influence and work has been very great. His high reputation in the business and public life of the city has helped to give the Association a certain standing in the eyes of the community. Along with the striking ability as a man of affairs which has impressed his fellow citizens, he has commended himself to the Association by his ardent sympathy with its aims and objects and his active interest through many years in various forms of religious and benevolent work. The Association is fortunate, at its jubilee, in having in the president’s chair one who thus adorns the position and commands the esteem of the community generally<sup>3</sup>”.*



*Adam Maitland.  
(Photographer unknown).*

He served as a councillor, and as Lord Provost of Aberdeen from 1911 to 1914.

President of the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce.

Trustee of the Aberdeen Savings Bank.

Director of the Royal Lunatic Asylum.

Convenor of the committee of the Morningfield Hospital.

Director of the North of Scotland and Town & County Bank, Limited.

He was also a Justice of the Peace and a director of various other companies.

Home address: Rubislaw Den House, Aberdeen.

### *Ship owned:*

SS **‘Alastair’** cargo steamer, (366 tons) built by John Duthie, Sons, & Co., Footdee, Aberdeen in 1902 (Part-owner).

### **Mr Charles Merrylees (1843 to 1911), Manager, North of Scotland and Orkney and Shetland Steam Navigation Company.**

It's very clear, at least to my mind why Charles Merrylees was invited to the launch of the 'Intaba'. Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. had already built the following ships for his company. However, it had been 7-years since they built a ship for his company, and they were obviously looking for some more orders in the future:

Date	Name	Yard No	Tons	Ship Type
1883	St. Rognvald	231	920	Steam driven Passenger / Cargo Vessels.
1887	St. Sunniva	244	966	
1892	St. Ola	271	258	
1892	St Giles	273	407	
1901	St. Rognvald	346	920	
1903	St Giles	371	609	

### **John Nicol C.M.G., and Miss Nicol.**

John Nicol (b.1838) was born at Ramstone, Monymusk, Aberdeenshire. In 1860, he left Aberdeenshire for Durban, Natal, and established himself as a builder and timber merchant. In 1862, he married Janet M<sup>c</sup>Donald, of Catrine, Ayrshire, Scotland. He was a member of Durban Town Council from 1885, and was Mayor of Durban 1897 to 1901. He was a justice of the peace for 8-years, and for many years a volunteer in the Durban Field Artillery. In 1901, he was awarded the Companion of St. Michael and St. George (C.M.G). Miss Nicol was presumably his daughter or niece.



*John Nicol C.M.G.  
(Photographer  
unknown).*

### **Mr W. Skirving, of the Aberdeen, Newcastle, and Hull Steamship Company.**

The company was founded in 1865, and had an office at Regent Quay, Aberdeen. The following vessels were built at Aberdeen for this company:

Ship Type	Date Built	Name	Builder	Yard No	Tons
Steamer	1870	James Hall	Hall, Russell & Co.	171	366
Steamer	1873	Alexander Pirie	Alexander Hall & Co.	282	514
Steamer	1882 (Bought 1894)	Glen Tilt	Alexander Hall & Co.	312	453
Steamer	1895	Norwood	Hall, Russell & Co.	286	798

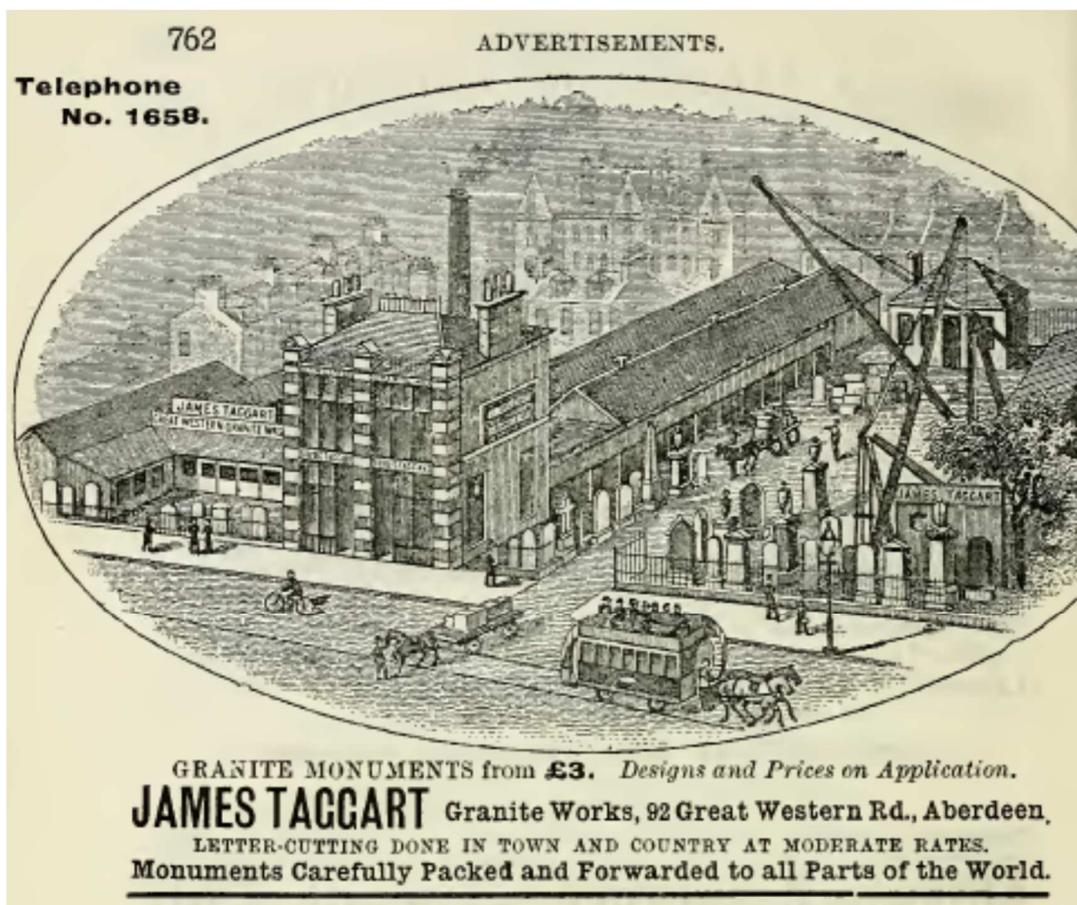
John T. Rennie was formerly a director of this company.

### James Taggart (1849 to 1929).

Granite merchant and monumental sculptor, Granite Works, No. 92 Great Western Road, Aberdeen. Home address No. 382 Great Western Road. Aberdeen Granite was shipped all around the World, and ships were needed to transport it. He was Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeen in 1905. He was a local councilor for the Ruthrieston Ward, Aberdeen, and served on several committees. He, later, 1914 to 1919 was Lord Provost of Aberdeen. Sir James Taggart was knighted in 1918. He died 25<sup>th</sup> November 1929, and is buried in the Springbank Cemetery, Aberdeen.



Sir James Taggart, from 'Stories told by Sir James Taggart' 1927.



Advert in the Aberdeen Post Office Directory 1909 to 1910, showing his granite works at No. 92 Great Western Road, Aberdeen.

### **Mr and Mrs J. A. Wood.**

*Mr James Alexander Wood was manager at J. T. Rennie & Sons, No. 48 Marischal Street, Aberdeen. Home address Albury Road, Aberdeen.*

### **Success to the Intaba.**

#### **Speech by Mr Alexander Hall Wilson Junior, Managing Director of Hall, Russell & Co.**

*The chairman said that as was the custom at launches, they were met there to have a glass of wine to celebrate the event that had taken place, and wish success to the fine vessel they had seen launched. The toast he had to propose was success to the **Intaba**, and prosperity to her owners – (applause). He felt sure their good wishes would go out to that ship, and that they would join with him in hoping that she might be in every way a successful and prosperous vessel; successful that she might perform the work for which she had been designed in an efficient and satisfactory manner; prosperous, that she might bring to her owners large and profitable returns – (applause). The **Intaba** had been built for the South African trade for the well-known firm of John T. Rennie and Sons. For almost sixty years that firm had been engaged in the trade, and in that trade no firm was so highly honoured or more respected and esteemed. The **Intaba** was the fifteenth vessel the firm had had the pleasure of building for Messrs. Rennie. All the vessels belonging to that line had been built in Aberdeen, and it must be very pleasing to Aberdonian's to find sons returning to their native city to satisfy their requirements in the way of good ships for their trade in other parts of the world – (applause). Each vessel had been larger than its predecessor, better equipped, and more highly finished, and the one they had seen launched that day was the largest, longest, and best equipped ship that had been launched from the port of Aberdeen – (applause). The **Intaba** was also a noteworthy vessel in that she had been constructed on what was known as the Isherwood system of framing. She was the first vessel to be built on that system not only in Aberdeen, but on the east coast of Scotland, and she was also the first vessel built on that system to obtain a Board of Trade passenger certificate. Under that system, the frames on which the shell was built were run longitudinally fore and aft instead of transversely, while the decks were supported on longitudinal girders instead of the usual transverse beams. As ships had got larger and larger the question of longitudinal strength was one to which much attention had been given by naval architects and it was one special feature of the of the Isherwood system that the strength was much greater than in the case of transverse frame vessels. Another advantage of the system was the large and capacious holds it provided and also the freedom from broken stowage. All those who had been over the **Intaba** were highly impressed with the satisfactory way in*

*which cargo could be stowed. With regard to her passenger accommodation the **Intaba** was fitted in a first class manner, and would carry about 70 first class and 60 second class passengers. He felt sure she would have large compliments, and everything had been done to provide for their comfort so that the voyage might be as pleasant as possible. The **Intaba** would also be fitted with Marconi's wireless telegraphy, so that those on board would know what was doing on shore and those on shore would be aware of what distinguished or other interesting individuals might be on board – (laughter). He had pleasure in submitting the toast "Success to the **Intaba** and prosperity to her owners."*

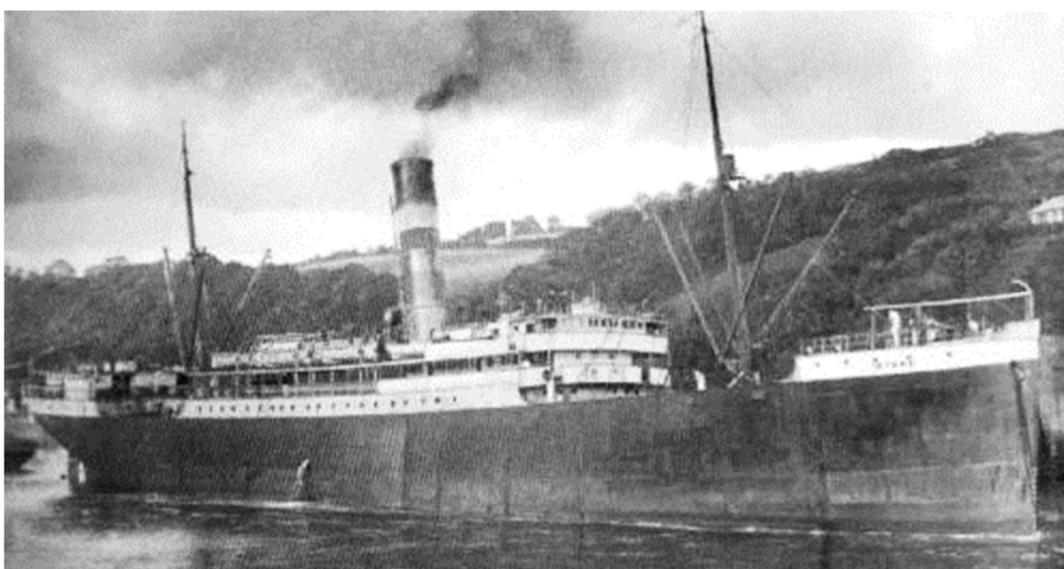
*The toast was heartily responded to.*

### **Mr Rennie and South Africa.**

#### **Speech by Mr George H. Rennie, Ship-owner.**

*Mr G. H. Rennie, who was received with applause, said he rose with very much pleasure to respond to the toast that had been so kindly and nicely proposed by Mr Wilson, and so cordially received by the gathering. Mr Wilson stated that it was the fifteenth vessel his firm had built for them, but his memory went a little further back than Mr Wilson's, and he made it out to be sixteen. In 1869 they built a vessel called the **Umvoti**, one of the first Hall, Russell had built, and he might tell them she was still going, although not for his firm. It looked extremely like as if Hall, Russell, and Co. commenced as they had gone on by giving first class work – (applause). He remembered the **Umvoti**, as she was the vessel in which he first went to London to commence his business career. He might say he was fonder of nothing in the world than assisting to plan a new ship. There was nothing he thought, where the question of compromise came in so much. If they could build a vessel to trade entirely in rough weather, or in fine weather, or in cold weather, or in hot weather, they might perhaps be able to construct a ship that would be nearly perfect for any one of those conditions, but when there were all those conditions to provide for, from the commencement of the keel to the finish, it was a huge compromise. He thought if one was to have a committee of captains or chief engineers or stewards to plan a ship the chances were they would all pull a good bit for themselves, and there would not be much left for the owners. When he represented the Chamber of Commerce of Aberdeen and the Shipping on Lloyd's Committee Mr Isherwood's plans were placed before the Committee for the first time. Their experts advised them that vessels of that kind should be classed at Lloyds. He then thought that when his firm were in a position to build a vessel they would adopt the Isherwood system as he was certain they were to get increased longitudinal strength and equal if not ~~lower~~ (Higher) transverse strength. He was certain the vessel was well built – (applause), and it might be conceded she would be well commanded by Captain Watling,*

*and her engines would be carefully attended under Mr Young – (applause). There was only one thing wanting to make her a success and that was the prosperity of the colony to which she was to trade. He might say, however, there had been increased signs of prosperity in South Africa. Mining was doing well and agriculture was doing particularly well. It was not always an unmitigated evil to get bad times, but they had had some very bad years. It had turned people’s thoughts to the land and he thought the colony was progressing. If it were progressing from the mineral and agricultural points of view that was surely a reason for believing it was progressing from a commercial point of view as well. He wished he could speak as confidently of the political point of view. He was sorry to say that all the aspirations they heard so much about in South Africa – they were going to do away with all racialism and they were all to be brothers: they were to abolish human nature – had not come off. He had never known the racial feeling so fierce as it is now. They had got to recognize the Union of South Africa as an accomplished fact. He hoped that after a few months trouble and the general election over, things might settle down a little, but at present he did not like the look of the situation. He thanked them sincerely for the kindly way they had received the toast so kindly proposed by Mr Wilson – (applause).*



*Steamship 'Intaba', post 1911 showing Harrison colors on her funnel.  
(Photographer unknown).*

## 16 Vessels built for Rennie, by Hall, Russell & Company (1869 to 1910).

Mr George H. Rennie (1851 to 1927) stated that Hall, Russell & Co., had built sixteen ships for the firm, correcting fifteen as stated by Mr Alexander Hall Wilson (M.D.). As per the table below, I can confirm Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. did indeed build sixteen ships for Rennie, although the tug 'Ingane' (360 tons) was owned by Chiazzario & Co., for use in Port Natal, with John T. Rennie acting as the build agent.

You can see from the table that Rennie's cargo / passenger ships were progressively getting bigger (The 'Induna' (266 tons) being the exception), and the longer the ship the greater the longitudinal strength required, which tells us why Rennie was so interested in the Isherwood System, ship-owners were of the opinion that economy was in the scale. Basically, the bigger the ship the more money that could be made.

Date	Name	Yard No.	Description	GRT (tons)	Length x Breadth x Depth (Feet & Inches)
1869	Umvoti	167	Sailing ship, cargo.	465	152'5" x 24'7" x 15'9"
1882	Dabulamanzi	227	Cargo Steamer.	1,537	261' x 35'1" x 24'7"
1886	Matabele	241	Cargo Steamer.	1,556	250'7" x 35'1" x 24'1"
1888	Inanda	247	Passenger Steamer.	1,758	271' x 35'1" x 24'11"
1889	Ifafa	252	Cargo Steamer.	1,788	271' x 35'1" x 24'7"
1890	Illovo	255	Cargo Steamer*.	1,930	276' x 36'1" x 25'7"
1890	Inyoni	257	Cargo Steamer*.	1,945	276' x 36'1" x 25'7"
1891	Induna	266	Cargo Steamer.	699	190'6" x 28'1" x 14'1"
1894	Inchanga	283	Cargo Steamer*.	2,197	288'9" x 39'1" x 25'10"
1896	Inyati	301	Cargo Steamer*.	2,516	310'9" x 40'1" x 25'11"
1897	Ingeli	303	Cargo Steamer*.	2,928	330'10" x 41'1" x 27'1"
1899	Insizwa	317	Cargo / Passenger Steamer.	2,984	330'5" x 41'1" x 27'2"
1902	Ingane	360	Tug.	216	110'3" x 23'1" x 11'3"
1902	Inkosi	361	Cargo / Passenger Steamer.	3,576	350'2" x 43'3" x 20'
1904	Inanda (2)	379	Cargo Steamer*.	4,090	370'11" x 46'1" x 29'1"
1910	Intaba	476	Cargo / Passenger Steamer.	4,832	387' x 48'1" x 30'

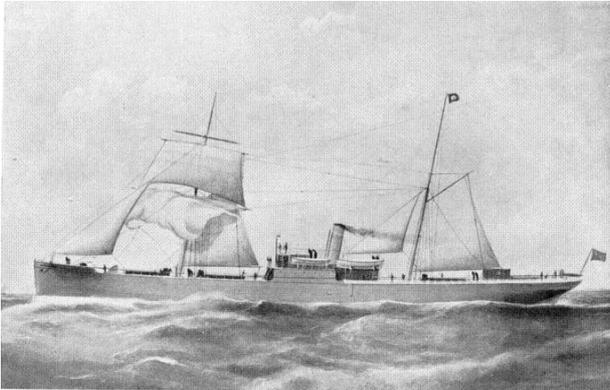
\* A cargo ship, but also had some capacity to carry passengers.

SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910.

Stanley Bruce, 2019-v1.

**Photographs of some of the 16 Rennie steam ships built by Hall, Russell & Co.**

**1882 - Dabulamanzi.**



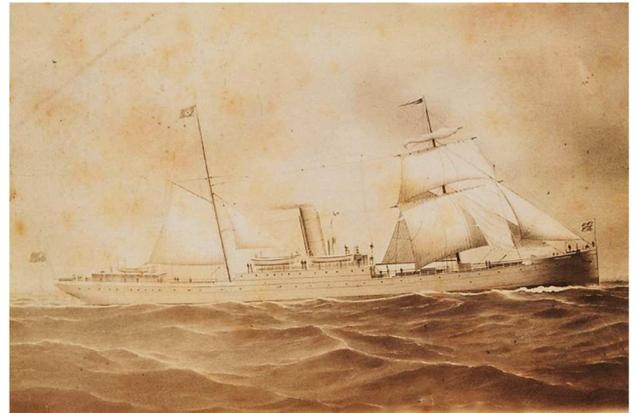
*By courtesy of A. Rennie, Esq.*

RENNIE'S FIRST 'ABERDEEN DIRECT' STEAMER  
THE *DABULAMANZI*, 1882



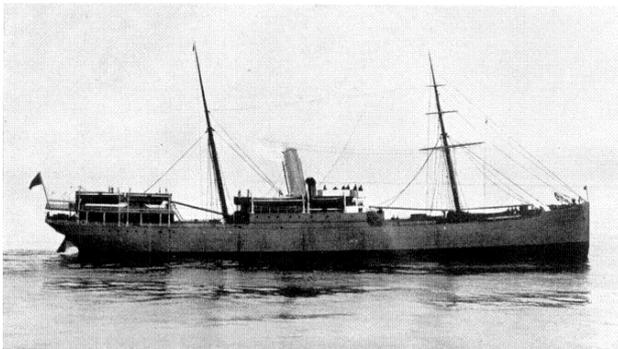
*'Induna'*, by Allan C. Green, (SLV).

**1894 - Inchanga.**



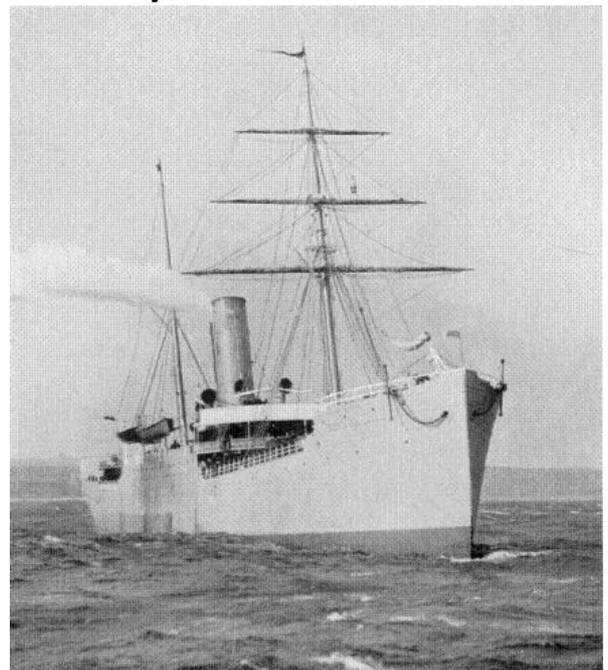
*'Inchanga'*.

**1886 - Matabele.**



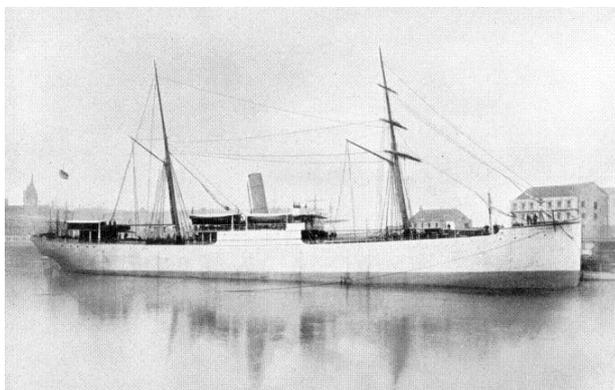
S.S. *MATABELE*, 1885  
Second steamer of Rennie's 'Aberdeen Direct' Line

**1896 - Inyati.**



*'Inyati'*.

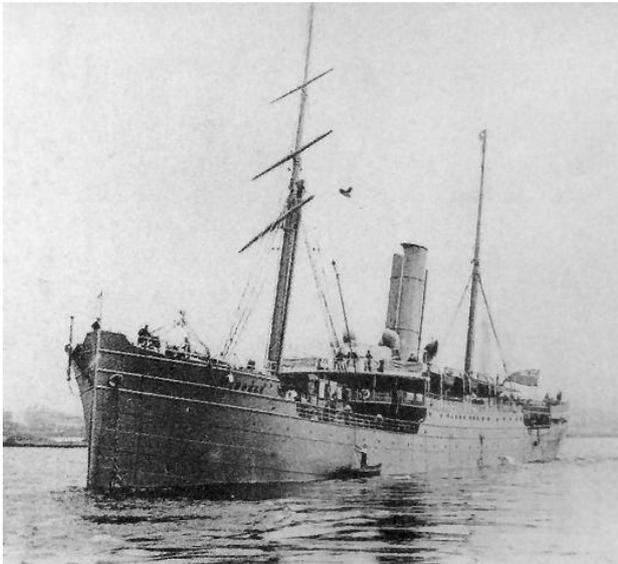
**1890 - Illovo.**



*By courtesy of A. Rennie, Esq.*

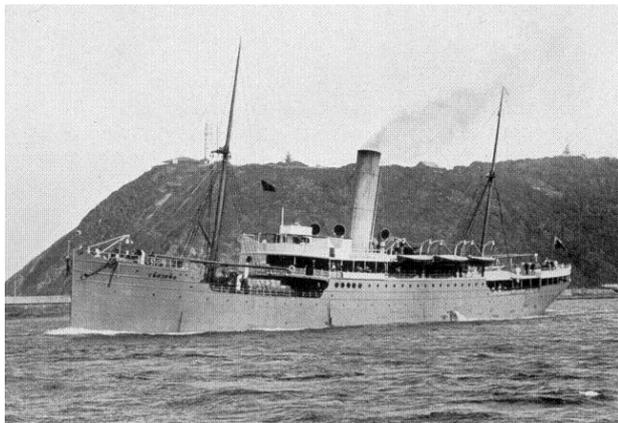
RENNIE'S 'ABERDEEN DIRECT' LINER *ILLOVO*, 1890

**1897 – Ingeli.**



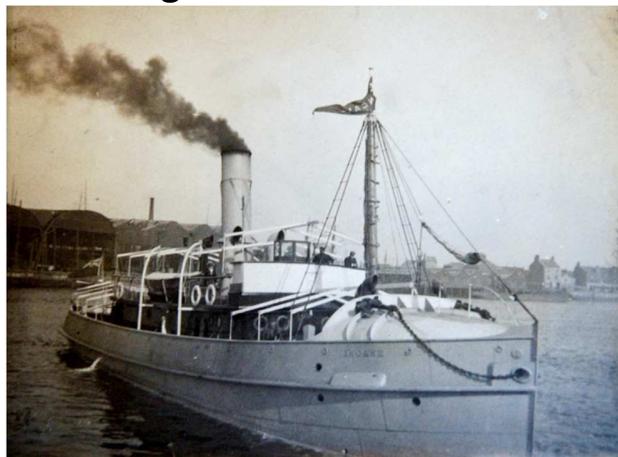
***'Ingeli' as the 'Tegucigalpa' (1).***

**1899 - Insizwa.**



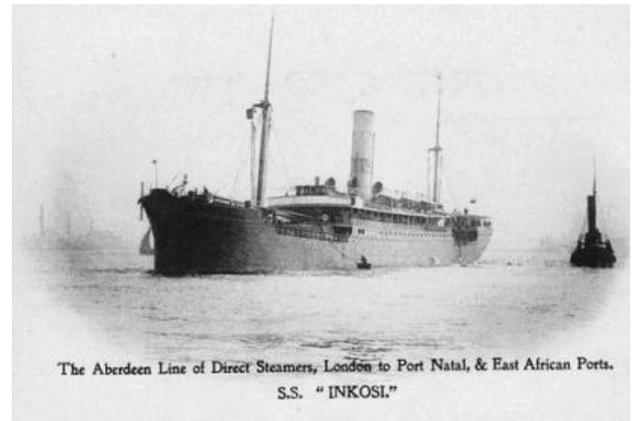
RENNIE'S 'ABERDEEN DIRECT' LINER *INSIZWA*, 1899

**1902 – Ingane.**



***'Ingane'.***

**1902 - Inkosi.**



The Aberdeen Line of Direct Steamers, London to Port Natal, & East African Ports.  
S.S. "INKOSI."

**1904 – Inanda (2).**



The Aberdeen Line of Direct Steamers, London to Port Natal, & East African Ports.  
S.S. "INANDA."

If you have a photograph or painting of any of the other four Rennie ships, 'Umvoti' (1869), 'Inanda' (1888), 'Ifafa' (1889), and 'Inyoni' (1890), please get in touch if you'd like to include it, using the e-mail address at the front of the book.

## ***The Health of Miss Byron.***

### ***Speech by Mr Alexander H. Rennie, Ship-owner.***

*Mr A. H. Rennie gave "The lady who christened the vessel." He said he had the pleasant duty to ask them to join with him in drinking the health of Miss Byron, who had so kindly come forward to assist them in the christening ceremony they had just witnessed. Miss Byron was the eldest daughter of one of their partners. Mr John Byron, who had been associated with their business for the last 41 years. In addition to being a partner had been a friend of the members of the firm, and highly esteemed by all of them. He would also say that he was esteemed by other members of the firm engaged in the South African trade – (applause). His name stood high in the City of London, and it was a great pleasure having him and his daughter there that day. He felt perfectly certain that he expressed the feelings of them all when he said that Miss Byron had performed the ceremony in a very capable and graceful manner. She had rather a long time to wait, but the **Intaba** was an Aberdonian, and took a long time to move. He hoped, however that like all Aberdonians who had left their native homeland, she would have a successful career – (applause). Ladies had been associated with launching since pre-historic times and he had made sure of his facts before making that statement. He was certain they would agree that it was Eve who launched Adam out of the Garden of Eden, and certainly they believed that it was Mrs Noah who launched the Ark, and Moses at any rate had been launched because he was found among the bulrushes- (laughter). They were delighted to have Robert Clark, the head of the Education Department of Natal with them, and he asked them to drink "Long life, happiness, and prosperity to Miss Byron," and thank her for the way she had performed the ceremony-(applause).*



*Map of South Africa.*

## **Durban's Progress.**

### **Speech by Mr John Byron, Ship-owner.**

*Mr Byron, in reply, said he was obliged to Mr Rennie for the way he had proposed the health of his daughter, and for the more than generous way he had referred to him. Standing in that place, his recollection went back to him who gave him his first welcome to Aberdeen, and who introduced him to the firm of Messrs. Hall, Russell and Co. He referred to Mr John T. Rennie – (applause). There were many present that day who were not born then, but there were also many who had always kept the memory of Mr John T. Rennie ever green and ever dear – (applause). Since then he had been associated with Mr George and Mr Alexander Rennie and others in an enterprise in connection with which that vessel, which had just taken the water, formed a part. With reference to the remarks which had fallen from Mr Wilson as to the length of time in which vessels of the Rennie Line had been launched in Aberdeen, he was very pleased to feel that the firm had been true to their first love, and that amid all the allurements of fresh fields and pastures new, they had stuck to the firm of Hall, Russell and Company. That was not the first time that he had had the pleasure of standing up here and returning thanks for the “lady who christened the vessel.” Twenty years ago, that very month, his wife had the very great pleasure and privilege of naming a vessel called the **Inyoni**, which had run her sixty-third voyage to Natal – (applause). He did not know the record of any mail steamer that sailed to the Cape, but the steamer bore a record for vessels sailing to the port of Natal. Mr Wilson also referred to the time the old flag had been flying, and the many changes that had taken place since that flag was aloft, but amidst all the changes there was nothing more remarkable than the change in the port, with which the steamers were more particularly identified. He meant Durban, and he first remembered it at a time when their little craft had to go out drawing only from 12 to 13 feet of water. The port had now been transformed into the finest sea-port on the South African coast. That had been brought about by the perseverance and industry of the Natalians - (applause). Any steamer could now go out and in to it at any state of the tide, and it was not only at the bar that changes had taken place. In the magnificent harbour they had magnificent stretches of water, which gave enough accommodation to meet every demand made on the port in these days. The port had become one of the principal coaling ports in the southern hemisphere. The record of work done during the last few months showed that to be the case. A steamer had been coaled in two and a half hours during which time 900 tons of coal were taken aboard. One fly in the ointment was that they had insufficient truck accommodation to bring the coal down from the mines. The railway was in the hands of the Government, and it was not in the power of private enterprise to develop it. He insisted, however, that the Government*

*would be equal to the occasion, and see that nothing would stand in the way of making Durban one of the finest coaling stations in the southern hemisphere – (applause).*

### ***The Builders of the Intaba.***

#### ***Speech by Mr George H. Rennie, Ship-owner.***

*Mr G. H. Rennie said he was going to give them an important toast – “The builders of the vessel.” He had known all the members of the firm Messrs. Hall, Russell and Company. These were James Hall, J. C. Cooper, Thomas Russell, Alexander Wilson, John Scott, and James Hunter, besides the partners, who were present that day. When he was there on a similar occasion some years ago he had to deplore the death of Mr Alexander Hall Wilson, and he was deeply grieved to have to record the death of Mr James Hunter, who has passed away recently, and he was sure that it was a great sorrow to many people that his cheery and pleasant countenance was not with them that day. The old order changed and gave place to the new, and the old firm of Hall, Russell and Company and had been rejuvenated. He gave special gratification to his partner and himself to again place an order in Aberdeen, and show that they had confidence in the new partners as well as the old - (applause). He was sure that the confidence would not be misplaced, because he was certain that they had got a splendid vessel. In Aberdeen, it was not necessary to say anything more about the firm, as they had been so long with them, and had circulated so much work in the town – (applause). He asked then to drink “Success and Prosperity to the firm of Messrs. Hall, Russell and Company” – (applause).*

The names of the deceased mentioned above were all former partners in the firm of Hall, Russell and Company.

James Hall (c1804 to 1869).

Thomas Russell (c1821 to 1886).

Alexander Hall Wilson (d.1899).

John Cardno Couper (c1821 to 1902).

John Scott (unknown).

James Hunter (d.1909). Home address Temora, Cults. (PO Dir 1909-1910).

## **Record Work by Builders.**

### **Speech by Mr Alexander Hall Wilson Junior, Managing Director of Hall, Russell & Co.**

*Of the firm of Hall, Russell and Company he had to thank Mr Rennie for the kind things he had said about the firm, and those present for the manner they had received the toast. It was a matter of great gratification to their firm to receive that order, and they had done everything in their power to make the ship fully up to expectations, and as good as any of those built for the firm before – (applause). He could assure them it was the earnest determination of the firm to maintain the good name of the company as high as it was before – (applause). They were gratified to receive the order, because it had given employment to many in Aberdeen during the depressing times through which trade had been passing. The **Intaba** was the largest vessel ever built at the port. For a vessel of her size and class she had been built in a very short time. When Mr Rennie placed the order in their hands he said he would like the ship delivered in the end of October. It was only eight and a half months since the vessel was placed and they hoped to have it ready by the end of October. That was far in advance of time vessels of a similar size had been built before, and while it was a shorter time and though they had been greatly helped by the improvements carried out during the last ten years, a great deal of credit was due to the cooperation of the staff, and especially to the services of the managers of the different departments. They had heard that the **Intaba** was built on the “Isherwood’ system. That showed the progressive firm the owners were, and he thought he might mention the many improvements that had taken place in connection with shipbuilding during the past 25 years. Messrs. Rennie had always been the first to introduce them on vessels. They were the first to introduce triple expansion engines, the first to introduce electric light, the first to have bilge keels, the first to have the Marconi wireless telegraphy installation, and the first to have their vessels built by that new system. There was another point to which he wanted to refer, and that was in connection with the new sheer poles. As shipbuilders they had been contented with the old sheer poles although limited both in their lifting capacity, and in their overhang. When they got the order for the **Intaba** it was at once seen that the old sheer poles would be of little use to them. The Harbour Commissioners took the matter up and decided to erect new sheer poles. Although the time had been limited they had been erected in less than six months, the best previous record for such work being from ten to twelve months. He thought it said a great deal for the energy of the Harbour Commissioners and their engineer, Mr Nicol – (applause). He wished to mention the appreciation they felt for the way the Harbour Commissioners had dealt with the matter. There was another matter which was much mentioned in harbour circles some years ago. It was suggested that a deep water berth should be run to the end of their jetty. If that*

SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910.

Stanley Bruce, 2019-v1.

*were done, it would do away with the building of such ships in Aberdeen as they had seen launched that day, and he hoped that they might never live to see such a jetty. He had to thank them for the manner in which they had received the toast - (applause).*

## Sheer Legs.

The Sheer Legs (or Poles), also known as the Sheer Legs, were a simple form of a crane, which formerly stood at the harbour North Lock, at the east end of Waterloo Quay. The 75 ton legs were erected in 1874. A second larger set were erected in 1910 capable of lifting 100 tons (These were 95 feet high and weighed 48 tons, and were powered by electrical equipment from J. J. Holmes and Co. of Newcastle). Local shipbuilders used them to lift engines, boilers and other heavy equipment on their ships. The 100 tons Sheer Legs



*Load test of the new 100 ton Sheer Legs, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1910.  
(3 days before the launch of the SS 'Intaba').  
(Photographer unknown).*

collapsed in September 1950 during 100mph high winds; the night watchman died when they collapsed on top of his hut<sup>7</sup>. The 75 ton legs were taken down in June 1975<sup>8</sup>.

**Bond of Empire Strengthened.****Speech by Mr. D. Milligan, advocate.**

*Mr D. M. M. Milligan advocate, said as the chairman had stated the special object of that gathering was the two fold one of congratulation and rejoicing – congratulations and good wishes to Messrs. Rennie on the successful launch of that magnificent vessel they had just added to their fleet, and to rejoice with them in the increasing prosperity of their great firm, which that event betokened, and to rejoice with themselves in the evidence which it afforded of the already wee-proved, but now doubly so, local patriotism of that distinguished firm – (applause). The toast he had the honour of being asked to submit – “Prosperity to the Province of Natal and the Union of South Africa” – was one which he was sure everyone present would admit was most appropriate to the occasion, because the prosperity of such firms as that of Messrs. Rennie and the success and prosperity of Natal and through Natal, of that Union of which it now formed a part, were mutually dependent – (applause). Commerce had always been, and in the future must increasingly more so, be one of the greatest factors in the building up of a country. There was a time, no doubt, when what was had was practically a monopoly. That was not so now. We could no longer lie down and bask in the sunshine of our past history and its experience. We were called upon to fight for our very existence, and it was by the energy, the enterprise, and the determination of firms like that of the Messrs. Rennie that the prosperity of the Province of Natal would be built up, and what perhaps after all was even of more importance, the bond of Empire secured and maintained – (applause). He did not pretend to understand all the complexities of that great South African problem to which Mr George Rennie had referred, but he could at all events say they must be very great. That, however, was no time for polemical discussion. The Union was now an accomplished fact, and it was the duty of every loyal citizen not only to wish but to do everything in his power to make that Union the success which they all desired it to be. Faults and flaws there undoubtedly might be in it, as there were in everything that was human, but he for one on an occasion like that beheld in the Union the birth of a new-born British race, which might by its prosperity in the future, and as it grew up by the proud association of its vigorous youth and of its manifold opportunities in the destinies and traditions of the mother land prove that it at all events was worthy to associate itself with us as joint heirs of all the glorious traditions of the British Empire – (applause). It was at all events in the spirit of that reflection that he submitted the toast to them, and in doing so he would express that hope that long might that Union be able to cultivate the arts of peace within that province, and to give to that reviving commerce of which they had heard new spheres of employment and new spheres of activity. Might that new-born Union weld together into one united whole the two great races which composed it into a Union animated by a common hope, a common loyalty, and*

SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910.

Stanley Bruce, 2019-v1.

*a common sense of kinship, because, if so, he was satisfied that in that Union we would see that there had been forged another link in that adamant chain of empire which we trusted would never break – (applause). He gave them, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that toast, and he had the privilege of associating with it the name of a gentleman Mr R. D. Clark, who, Scotchman like themselves and originally hailing from this part of the country, like so many other distinguished Scotchmen, went forth early in life to help to build up the great British dominions beyond the seas, and who in the sphere of education in South Africa had nobly discharged his part – (applause).*

David M. M. Milligan, MA, was admitted to the Society of Advocates in 1886. He worked for Davidson & Garden, Advocates, No. 12 Dee Street, Aberdeen. His home address was No. 20 Albyn Place, Aberdeen. He was a director of the Caledonian Steam Trawling Company Ltd., honorary treasurer and secretary of the Royal Aberdeen Hospital for Sick Children, clerk and treasurer for the Asylum for the Blind, Huntly Street, and he sat on several other local committees and associations.



*SS 'Intaba' (photographed by Ernest G. Best).*

*(Courtesy of the State Library of New South Wales, Reference Code: 455828).*

## **Danger to Union.**

### **Speech by Mr Robert Clark M.A.**

*Mr R. D. Clark, in acknowledging, said he wished he could bring to bear on the reply to that toast the same eloquence his friend Mr Milligan had brought to bear on the proposing of it. It would be a great pleasure to him when he went back to Natal on board the beautiful ship whose launch they had been privileged to witness that day to tell his fellow-colonists of the kindly and eloquent way in which the toast of the colony was proposed, and of the hearty way in which it was responded to by so distinguished a gathering. He regretted that in place of a humble scholar there was not one of their numerous hall-marked statesmen to reply to that toast – (laughter). Their colony had been so prolific in these that but for the fact that they were all possessed of a bloodthirsty clinging to life the area of the colony available for mealie growing would have been considerably diminished by the sites for their statues – (laughter). Any way he had to confess that his imagination had been profoundly struck not only by what they had seen in the building yard, but by the words that had fallen from the lips of the different speakers. That as a great day for Aberdeen a great day for the building yard of Messrs. Hall, Russell, and Co., a great day for the enterprising firm of Rennie and Son, and a great day for Natal. Natal had been well served by John T. Rennie and Son. The Natal Direct Line, as they had heard, began in the day of small things, but it had gathered strength as it went on, and the **Intaba**, now safely lying in the waters of the dock, was the outward and visible symbol of what Natal would reap from the service of the Direct Line. Might he also hope that it was a symbol of what the owners of the Direct Line would rap in return – (applause). They had with them that day Mr John Nicol, four times Mayor of Durban, in the time of Natal's sorest need, and the first Mayor of Durban to receive honours at the hands of his Sovereign – (applause). Mr Nicol would remember the time of storm and stress for Natal when their commercial rivals used to describe them in a patronising way as "a forwarding agency tempered by a Kaffir location" – (laughter) – or as "Durban with appendages." – (laughter). The latest gibe at their expense fell not so very long ago from the oldest stormy petrel of South African politics – Mr John Merriman - when he alluded to the picturesque individuality of Natal – (laughter). Mr Merriman was afraid they were to lose that picturesque individuality in union. He could assure them there was no danger of Natal losing her picturesque individuality in union, and there was no danger of Natal losing her legitimate influence in the councils of United South Africa, because the province of Natal would be in the hands of men from the north of Scotland. The first administrator Sir C. G. Smythe is a Perthshire man the first Puisne Justice, the ablest lawyer on the bench of the Supreme Court, Mr Dove Wilson was an Aberdonian – (applause). The Superintendent of Education, Mr Murdie, hailed from Dundee; and the Vice-chairman of the Natal University College Council, who had the honour of addressing them was a native*

*of the Mearns – (applause). Therefore, all was well in Natal – (applause). The picturesque event of that day brought before his mind, he thought, before everyone’s mind, and he was sure Mr Milligan was impressed with the same thing, for it inspired him in his eloquent speech – the launch of the **Intaba** brought forcibly to his mind Longfellow’s poem on “The Launch of the Fleet”. He marked a pessimistic note in his friend, Mr George Rennie’s outlook on the present situation in South Africa. That was one point on which he would not stand in with his dear old friend. Instead of being pessimistic with regard to the future of South Africa, he was purely optimistic. There was only one real danger to the success of the Union of South Africa, and that lay in the shape of the vapourings of a hireling section of the South African press and might he also say in that distinguished gathering that the man who at this time of day would set Boer and Briton by the ears was guilty of a crime compared to which the crime of Judas was a comparatively venial one – (applause).*

*He wished also to say that the one thing that hastened the union of South Africa was the instinct of self-preservation. They had heard and read of the native problems, and it was seen at the sittings of the Convention, and before they dealt with that problem, Boer and Briton should stand shoulder to shoulder, and one of the main and most beneficent results of the South African union would be that they should be able to establish and maintain a consistent policy in regard to the natives. They were bound by every divine and human obligation to be just to those children of humanity, but they could not afford to spoil them. They had got under union to assign to the native his proper niche in the social, industrial, and political framework of South Africa, and of what should be his proper niche the Kaffir himself was not the proper judge, not even Exeter Hall, but the people who were out there and who had the responsibility – (applause). He could assure them he looked forward to the Union of South Africa as going to prove one of the sources of strength of the great British Empire, to which Boer and Briton alike were justly proud to belong – (Loud applause).*

## ***The Town and Trade of Aberdeen.***

### ***Speech by Mr John Nicol C.M.G.***

*Mr John Nicol, C.M.G., London, ex-Mayor of Durban, proposed “The Town and Trade of Aberdeen.” The trade of Aberdeen, so far as he could see, consisted of their fishing industry; their second was their shipbuilding, of which they had a fair specimen that day, and their third was undoubtedly their granite, which had always been known all over the world. Their fishing trade was a marvel. Anyone going to the fish market in the morning and seeing the fish landed could tell that the industry was a great factor in keeping up the prosperity of Aberdeen – (applause). Their shipbuilding had always been noted. In the days of the clipper ships their builders were known and respected all over the world. In connection with the granite industry, Aberdeen was widely known, and London had come to them for stone. The progress of Aberdeen had been marvellous. He left Aberdeen some fifty years ago, and when he looked back, he remembered that their Links were sand hillocks. At the west end of the town they had beautifully laid out streets, and rows of houses, and they did not see houses to let, which showed that Aberdeen was prospering. No one had done more for the prosperity of Aberdeen than Messrs. Rennie. They had come to Aberdeen for sixteen steamers, and he felt that the day was not far distant when Messrs. Rennie would have to come back, and in addition to bringing prosperity to Aberdeen, would show that the Line was prospering also. Their town was the cleanest and best managed he knew, and their Lord Provost and Town Council must have given great care and time to the work of looking after it. He had never seen a cleaner or better town than Aberdeen. They apparently had no slums, the slums he knew in his days having been cleared away. With regard to those places they deserved all praise, but their railway station might be improved. If there was anyone connected with the railway there he hoped that something might be done to stir up those responsible in order that a better station might be erected. He took the opportunity of friends in Durban to wish the **Intaba** all success, and the builders good wishes. He wished the vessel a long and prosperous career, with full cargoes in and out. He thought which she would get that more especially if her bunkers were filled with Elandslaagte coal – (applause).*

(Elandslaagte is farming and coal-mining centre some 26km north-east of Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa).

### **Sir John Fleming.**

*Sir John Fleming said he was sorry that the Lord Provost was not there to reply, because he represented the timber trade. In that trade they had had seven lean years, and they sometimes thought that these were to form into seventy. They hoped, however to have a few more friends like the Rennies, and that things would take a turn. He understood that the name of the vessel meant mountain. It took a long time to shift it. By faith, however, it was at last shifted, and if the people of Aberdeen would only have faith and a few more friends like the Rennie's, he would have no fear of the future prosperity of Aberdeen – (applause).*

(John Fleming was Lord Provost of Aberdeen from 1898 to 1902).

### **The Health of Captain Watling.**

#### **Speech by Daniel Mearns, former Lord Provost of Aberdeen.**

*Ex-Lord Provost Mearns said the toast which he had been honoured in being asked to propose was one which could not be overlooked. He referred of course, to the toast of "The Captain". They might build ships and place them in the water, as had successfully done that day by the launch of the **Intaba**, the largest vessel yet built at the port, but before that vessel proved herself the success they all wished her, she had to be placed under the guidance of one individual who was generally known as the "man at the wheel." The master of such a vessel had great responsibilities resting on him, and he, and he alone, had to see that a safe path was laid out for her future journeying – (applause). If they had not come much in contact with Captain Watling, they had sufficient information to show them that he was the right man in the right place. He was the senior in the service, and had reached the top of the tree in it. With a twenty years experience as master, he had been successful in all the vessels he had commanded. He was quite sure that when he took that vessel away he would carry with him the best wishes of that commercial community for his continued success – (applause). He asked them to join with him in wishing Captain Watling health and happiness in his new command, and he hoped he would soon be back for a larger vessel – (applause). Captain Watling in reply, said that like the majority of sailors, he was not a speechmaker. He joined Messrs. Rennie's firm 22 years ago, and practically saw the steam part of the fleet coming into being. They had a clean record for regularity, and also for freeness from mishaps. That reflected credit on the builders, owners, and personnel of the fleet. He hoped the **Intaba** would prove no exception to that rule – (applause). The toast of "Bon-Accord" proposed by the chairman, concluded the proceedings.*

### **Daniel Mearns (1838 to 1913).**

Daniel Mearns, son of an Aberdeen shipmaster was Lord Provost of Aberdeen from 1895 to 1898. He was a ship chandler in the firm of Mr P. Buyers, No. 62 Regent Quay, and Mearns Street, Aberdeen. Described as *'The Largest Ship Store Dealers on the East Coast'*. He was well known locally, and a prominent member of the community. He served on Aberdeen Harbour Board, the Scottish Fishery Board and the Marine Board. He was also Consul to Argentina, and a Governor of Robert Gordon's Technical College.



*Daniel Mearns, former Lord  
Provost of Aberdeen.  
(Photographer unknown).*

### **Captain John William Watling.**

During WW1, the Admiralty in August 1914 appointed Lieutenant John William Watling as the Commanding Officer of the SS **'Intaba'**. Post-WW1; on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 1920, he was appointed as an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (Military Division) – OBE.

### **History of the Intaba.**

20<sup>th</sup> September 1910: The Times newspaper reported as follows: *"TRAINING OF MERCHANT OFFICERS. – In order to meet the demand for more opportunities for the training of officers for the Mercantile Marine, Messrs. John T. Rennie, Son, and Co. have arranged to carry midshipmen in their new steamship 'Intaba', recently launched at Aberdeen for their South African service"*.

8<sup>th</sup> August 1911: She was bought by the Charente Steamship Co., Ltd. (Thos. & Jas. Harrison, Managers) Liverpool, for £72,073, her name was unchanged. She continued trading on the London to Natal route.

2<sup>nd</sup> October 1913: She caught fire while sailing in the English Channel, and was taken to London, and repaired in November.

## **World War One.**

5<sup>th</sup> August 1914: She was requisitioned by the Admiralty to augment the ships of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA), and commenced services as a Flotilla Stores Ship. She served in the Caribbean, Falklands, the Far East, and as a destroyer depot ship for ships on the Dover Patrol.

August 1914: Lieutenant John W. Watling Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) was appointed as Commanding Officer, and Engineer George Young RNR appointed as Chief Engineer Officer.

21<sup>st</sup> April 1915: She was re-deployed as a Squadron Supply Ship, Pennant No. Y9.30.

22<sup>nd</sup> October 1915: she arrived at Stanley, Falkland Islands, and left 1<sup>st</sup> November 1915.

6<sup>th</sup> January 1916: she arrived at Stanley, Falkland Islands.

17<sup>th</sup> January 1916: She proceeded to Sierra Leone calling at Abrolhos Rocks on route; her cargo was 2,592 bales of wool.

April 1916: After being fitted with one 4-inch breech loading gun, two 13-pounders and two 12-pounders she commenced service as a Q-Ship, and served as pennant number 'Q2', then 'Waitomo', her name was changed again to 'Waitoppo' to avoid confusion with the Union Steamship Co. of New Zealand's ship named 'Waitomo'. (The purpose of the Q-ships (decoy ship) was to lure unsuspecting U-boats to within range of its guns, and then to drop all pretence of disguise, and attack and sink the U-boat with gunfire).

8<sup>th</sup> December 1916: With Commander Frank Powell in command she was attacked and damaged by a German submarine 'U67' in the Barents Sea, near Vardö, Norway. Royal Navy Ordinary Seaman William Kinnaird, (b. 1888) aged 38-years, of Slinfold, Sussex, Official Number Port Division J51669 was discharged dead – killed in action, and buried at sea.

12<sup>th</sup> July 1917: She ended her service as a Q-Ship and was re-deployed as Expeditionary Force Transport.

8<sup>th</sup> October 1917: She was re-deployed as a Sugar Transporter to and from Mauritius.

5<sup>th</sup> January 1918: She was re-deployed as Expeditionary Force Transport.

17<sup>th</sup> March 1918: She was re-deployed as a Wheat Transporter, carrying rice.

1918: she returned to her owners.

To read more about her time with the Admiralty in WW1 look in [www.historicalrfa.org](http://www.historicalrfa.org)

SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910.

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### **Post-World War One.**

1921: she was transferred to the London - West Indies route, which she operated along with the steamship '**Ingoma**'.

1926: she was laid up.

17<sup>th</sup> May 1927: She was bought by Hajee Mohamed Hassan Nemazee, Hong Kong, and renamed '**Englestan**'.



*Pilgrims boarding SS '**Intaba**' 1920's. (Photographer unknown).*

August 1929: She was bought by the Bengal Burma Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., Rangoon (Yangon), Burma, her name remained unchanged as '**Englestan**'.

1932 / 1933: the Scindia Steam Navigation Co. Ltd., took over the Bengal Steam Navigation Co., Ltd. (A. B. Chowdry, Manager).

December 1937: she was the first Scindia Haj Pilgrim ship when she left Calcutta for Jeddah.

May 1951: with the liquidation of the Bengal Burma Steam Navigation Co., ownership of the '**Englestan**' was transferred to the parent company Scindia Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.

August 1952: She was sold for scrap to Van Heyghen Freres, Ghent, Belgium.

31<sup>st</sup> October 1952: She sailed from Bombay, under tow, to Ghent, Belgium.

21<sup>st</sup> January 1953: She arrived at Ghent, Belgium, and within a week they commenced breaking her up.

## Abbreviations

C.M.G.	Companion of St. Michael and St. George.
GRT	Gross Registered Tonnage.
ihp	Indicated Horse Power.
M.I.M.E.	Member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.
MIMarEST	Member of the Institute of Marine Engineers, Scientists, and Technologists.
RFA	Royal Fleet Auxiliary.
RNR	Royal Navy Reserve.
SS	Steamship.

## Acknowledgements

Len Bain, Aberdeen, for giving me the newspaper article regarding the **'Intaba'** from the Aberdeen Free Press, dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 1910, and to the late Gladys Duthie (1900 to 1978) for keeping it. When I met with Len, I thanked him for the paper clippings he gave me, and I said to him quite often small things lead to something else, and that's exactly what happened here. This book wouldn't have been written without the paper clipping from the Aberdeen Free Press I received from Len.

Brian Bain, son of Len Bain for writing the foreword.

George Wood, for proof reading and assistance, and for the photo of the **'Ingane'**.

Chris Davidson, for help with Davidson ship-owners and their ships.

Mrs Carole Thomson, Library Assistant, Aberdeenshire Library, Local Studies, Oldmeldrum, for help with the microfiche.

## Websites.

<a href="http://www.electricscotland.com">www.electricscotland.com</a>	The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen.
<a href="http://www.aberdeenships.com">www.aberdeenships.com</a>	Information on over 3,000 Aberdeen built ships.
<a href="http://www.historicalrfa.org">www.historicalrfa.org</a>	Royal Fleet Auxiliary Historical Society.
<a href="http://www.gracesguide.co.uk">www.gracesguide.co.uk</a>	Information on Thomas Russell (c.1821-1886).
<a href="http://www.fraserburghheritage.com">www.fraserburghheritage.com</a>	Information on Charles Rawden Maclean (John Ross).

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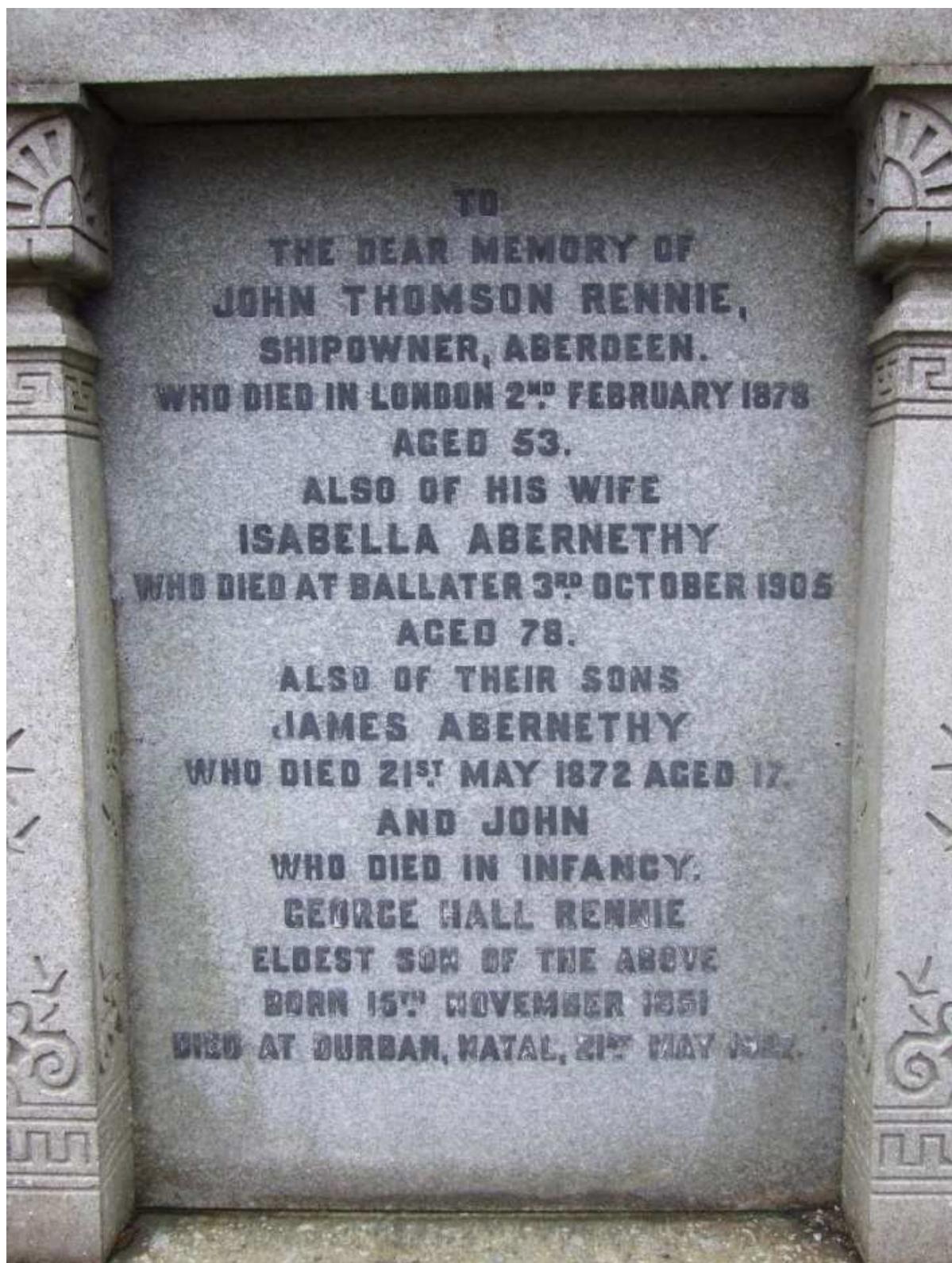
- 1 Aberdeen Free Press article, 7<sup>th</sup> September 1910 – Launch of the Intaba.
- 2 Natal Who's Who, 1906.
- 3 The Aberdeen Young Men's Christian Association: Its Origin and History, A Jubilee Retrospect, by Alexander Gammie (1908).
- 4 The Colonial Clippers by Basil Lubbock (1921).
- 5 Maritzburg College Book No. 145, October 2011.
- 6 [www.gracesguide.co.uk](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk) information on Thomas Russell (c.1821-1886).
- 7 Aberdeen Memories, A Hidden Archive Uncovered, compiled by Raymond Anderson (2000), ISBN 978-1-908234-01-8.
- 8 Aberdeen Since 1900, A Century of Photographs by Paul Harris (1996), ISBN 0-9514985-2-5.

## **Further Reading**

House of Rennie One Hundred Years of Shipping 1849 – 1949. Privately published book.

## APPENDIX A

### John Thomson Rennie - Some Family History.



*Gravestone of ship-owner John Thomson Rennie (c1825 to 1878), Nellfield Cemetery, Aberdeen. (S. Bruce).*

***The gravestone of J. T. Rennie reads:***

TO  
THE DEAR MEMORY OF  
JOHN THOMSON RENNIE,  
SHIPOWNER, ABERDEEN,  
WHO DIED IN LONDON, 2<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 1878  
AGED 53.  
ALSO OF HIS WIFE  
ISABELLA ABERNETHY  
WHO DIED AT BALLATER 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 1905  
AGED 78.  
ALSO OF THEIR SONS  
JAMES ABERNETHY  
WHO DIED 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 1872, AGED 17  
AND JOHN  
WHO DIED IN INFANCY  
GEORGE HALL RENNIE  
ELDEST SON OF THE ABOVE  
BORN 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 1851  
WHO DIED AT DURBAN NATAL 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 1927.

## APPENDIX B

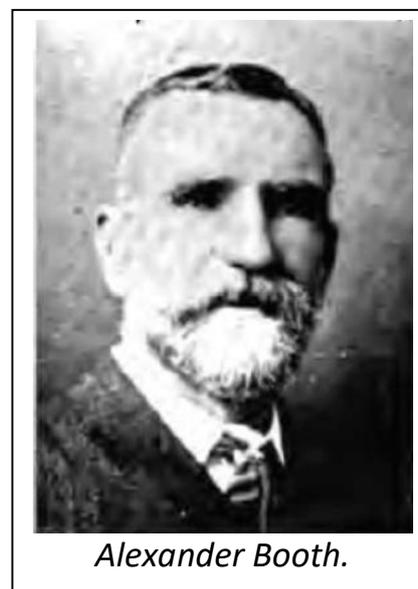
### Some Aberdonian's in Natal.

The following information is taken from the Natal, Who's Who book dated 1906.

**CRUICKSHANK, Alexander**; born 1864, in Aberdeen; youngest son of Captain George Cruickshank; married 1889, Janet Nicholson, daughter of A. Watson, "Millbank", Kincardineshire; 2 children. Educated at Grammar and Rammage's Schools. Address 3 Castle Buildings, Durban; and "Silverhillocks", Marriott Road, Durban. Went to sea 1878, and remained in sailing ships until 1885, then in steam (Anchor and other lines); subsequently in **J. T. Rennie & Sons, London, South African Line** for 14 years as Chief Officer and Commander, resigning from their employ in 1903 to take up the appointment at Port Natal as Surveyor to "Germannischer Lloyd", "Bureau Veritas", and "Det Norske Veritas".



**BOOTH, Alexander, Pirie, M.I.M.E**, born 8<sup>th</sup> November, 1853, at Aberdeen; eldest son of late Richard Booth, of Aberdeen; married 1878, Helen Soutter, daughter of late William Taylor, of Aberdeen; 5 children. Address Superintendent and Surveyor of Machinery, Port Dept., Point; and 138, Point Road, Durban. Educated Aberdeen. Hobbies: Sports, member of Durban Bowling Club. Apprenticed **Hall, Russell, & Co., Shipbuilders and Engineers, Aberdeen**. Arrived in Natal 1882, and been in Port Dept. since. Came out on government tug 'Churchill'; Chief Engineer on her for some years; later sent Home to supervise building of tug 'Richard King'. On return to Colony was appointed to present position. Also, sent Home to supervise building of pump dredger 'Octopus'. Again returning, was finally sent Home to supervise construction of tug 'Harry Escombe', pump dredgers 'Grampus', 'Nautilus', and 'Snipe'.



In 1883, Hall, Russell & Co. built a tug named 'Churchill' (194 tons) for the Natal Harbour Board, Durban.

## APPENDIX C

### OBITUARY - THE LATE MR JOHN T. RENNIE.

#### **Aberdeen Journal - Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 1878, (page 8).**

*Our obituary of to-day contains the sad announcement of the death of our much-respected townsman, Mr John Thomson Rennie, ship-owner. He died at his residence, Craigendarroch, Forest Hill, London, on Saturday morning, after a brief illness of three days. Mr Rennie was about 53 years of age. He was born in Aberdeen, where his father was a shipmaster. He entered the office of Mr Henry C. Oswald, shipbroker, and after serving an apprenticeship commenced on his own account. After being in business for some time he started line of traders from London to Natal, which has contributed much to the development of the trade of South Africa. The vessels, which are still on the registry of the port of Aberdeen, are of very superior class, and were mostly built by the Messrs. Hall. The fleet now consists of eight vessels. About twelve or thirteen years ago, in consequence of his large business connection, he established a house in London and removed thither, but still continued to have an office Aberdeen, and his residence at Deemount, which he occupied usually in the summer. He was member of the Mercantile Marine Board, and a director of the Standard Bank of Africa, for which, for some time, he acted as agent in Aberdeen; and he also at one time was a director of the Aberdeen, Newcastle, and Hull Steam Company. In 1848 he married the youngest daughter\* of the late Mr James Abernethy, of Ferryhill, by whom he is survived. He leaves family of six sons and two daughters. Two of the elder sons are at present in Natal in connection with the business there. For many years Mr Rennie was an office-bearer in the Free South Church, and latterly he was a member of the Independent Church in London. Although he took keen interest in politics and local affairs he never came forward in the capacity of a public man. Shrewd and enterprising in business he was most honourable in all his dealings. He enjoyed the esteem of very large number of friends, besides the warm affection of a numerous circle of relations, by all of whom, as well as by those who had occasion to come in contact with him in the sphere of business, he will be very much regretted.*

*We may mention that Mr Rennie was one of the passengers who were saved from the wreck of the 'Orion' when she was lost on her passage from Liverpool to Glasgow in the year 1850.*

\*John Rennie married Isabella Abernethy (1826 to 1905).

SS Intaba, built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd., York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910.

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The **'Orion'** (700 tons) was a steamship built by Caird & Company, Greenock, in 1846. She sank within minutes when she hit a sunken rock north of Portpatrick, Scotland on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1850, while on passage from Liverpool to Glasgow.



*Deemount House, Deemount Road, Ferryhill, Aberdeen, former home of John T. Rennie, ship-owner. (S. Bruce).*

## APPENDIX D

### Charles Rawden Maclean (John Ross).

I have added this appendix simply because I was born in Fraserburgh (aka The Broch), and I knew the story about fellow Brocher Charles Rawden Maclean aka “John Ross”, whose story fits with the Northeast / Natal connection.

Charles Rawden Maclean was born in Fraserburgh 17<sup>th</sup> August 1815.

Maclean’s father was a naval officer, and Maclean also chose the sea for his career. He got an apprenticeship with James Saunders King, master of the brig **‘Mary’** (150 tons). (*William Stephen, shipbuilder, Footdee, Aberdeen, built a brig of the same name in 1810*).

1825, 1<sup>st</sup> October: Charles Maclean was onboard the **‘Mary’** when it was shipwrecked at Port Natal harbour on a sand bank. Zulu king Shaka demanded Maclean stayed at his kraal (home), and Maclean spent between 2 and 3 years there.

1827: Maclean and ten Zulu warriors made the dangerous journey on foot to Delagoa Bay approximately 600-mile round trip, to get medicines for the settlement. On his return, Maclean was celebrated as the saviour of the community.

1828, 30<sup>th</sup> April: Maclean and others left Port Natal on the rebuilt ship, now named **‘Elizabeth and Susan’**.

1836: Nathaniel Isaacs a Port Natal settler published a book which included the story about the trip to Delagoa Bay for essential medicines, but it is thought that he’d forgotten Maclean’s name, and used John Ross instead.

1852: Maclean gained his Master's Certificate of Competence, and he is said to have crewed all his ships with freed black slaves, he was often the only white person aboard.

13<sup>th</sup> March 1880: he died at sea on **‘RMS Larne’** (1, 670 tons) on route to Southampton. He was buried in Southampton in an unmarked grave. This was put right when a memorial was erected on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2009, which reads *“Friend to King Shaka Zulu”* & *“Opponent of Slavery”*.

A statue of him created by South African sculptor Mary Stainbank (1899 to 1996) stands outside John Ross House in Durban. There is a display dedicated to him in Fraserburgh Heritage Centre, and one to James Ramsay (1733 to 1789) Abolitionist.



*John Ross statue, Durban. (Creative Commons Wikipedia).*

**APPENDIX E****Other Ships Built in Aberdeen Shipyards for Rennie's.**

The Rennie's had several other ships built by other Aberdeen shipbuilders; at least eight off which were built before the company of Hall, Russell & Co. built their first ship in 1867. Some of these were part-owned, some fully-owned by J. T. Rennie.

Ship Name	Shipbuilder	Date Built	Description	GRT	Owner / Shares
Samson	Alexander Hall & Co.	1836	Hermaphrodite	120	George Rennie. 8/64. Full owner 1845.
Eliza Hall	Walter Hood & Co.	1843	Brig	200	George Rennie part-owner and shipmaster.
Conqueror	Alexander Hall & Co.	1850	Ship	458	J. T. Rennie. 16/64.
Huguenot	Alexander Duthie & Co.	1858	Ship	472	J. T. Rennie. 40/64.
Natal Star	Alexander Hall & Co.	1862	Ship	366	J. T. Rennie. 48/64.
Prince Alfred	William Duthie Junior & Co.	1862	Barque	258	J. T. Rennie. 52/64.
Tugela	Alexander Hall & Co.	1864	Ship	475	J. T. Rennie. 48/64. George Rennie shipmaster, 8/64.
Umgeni	John Smith & Co.	1864	Ship	366	J. T. Rennie.
Illovo	Alexander Hall & Co.	1867	Ship	398	J. T. Rennie.
Maritzburg	Alexander Hall & Co.	1876	Barque	456	J. T. Rennie.
Natal	Alexander Hall & Co.	1876	Barque	445	J. T. Rennie.
Quathlamba	Alexander Hall & Co.	1879	Barque	495	J. T. Rennie.

The above table, including the earlier built '**Samson**' gives twelve ships built in Aberdeen for J. T. Rennie, add this to the sixteen built by Hall, Russell & Co., gives a total of 26 ships built in Aberdeen specifically for J. T. Rennie.

## APPENDIX F

### Duthie Memorial

#### Allenvale Cemetery, Aberdeen.



*Duthie Memorial, Allenvale Cemetery, Allenvale Road, Aberdeen. (S. Bruce).*

#### The memorial reads:

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

JAMES DUTHIE 1835 – 1900

HIS WIFE

ELSPET EDDIE 1844 – 1918

THEIR DAUGHTER

ISABELLA DUTHIE 1873 – 1918

THEIR SONS

WILLIAM DUTHIE 1878 – 1909.

**ALEXANDER DUTHIE 1870 – 1929**

**HIS WIFE**

**MARY HUNTER 1870 – 1959**

**THEIR DAUGHTER**

**GLADYS M. DUTHIE 1900 – 1978**

**APPENDIX G****Ships Built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd, in 1910.**

1910 was a very busy year for Hall Russell & Co., Ltd., the company launched 12 vessels, 11 small fishing boats plus the SS 'Intaba'. Most of the fishing boats were built for local owners, however the list includes one built for Argentinian owners and one for French owners.

<b>Yard No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>GRT</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Owners</b>
447	Lass o' Doune.	92	Steam Herring Drifter.	Falconer & Co., Macduff.
448	Loch Craig.	91	Steam Herring Drifter.	Lyall & West, Macduff.
472	Strathlossie.	193	Steam Trawler.	Aberdeen Steam Trawling and Fishing Company, Aberdeen.
473	Strathalmond.	194	Steam Trawler.	Aberdeen Steam Trawling and Fishing Company, Aberdeen.
474	Craigiewan.	204	Steam Trawler.	Peterhead Trawling Co. Ltd, Peterhead.
475	Seis.	263	Steam Trawler.	Sociedad Pescadora Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
476	Intaba.	4,832	Steamer, Passenger & Cargo.	J. T. Rennie & Sons, No. 48 Marischal Street, Aberdeen.
477	Loch Maree.	215	Steam Trawler.	White Star Steam Fishing Company Limited, No. 164 Market Street, Aberdeen.
478	Charles.	93	Steam Trawler.	Soc Anon du Vapeur Charite, Dieppe, France.
479	John G. Watson.	196	Steam Trawler.	Richard Irvin & Sons Limited, Albert Quay, Aberdeen.
480	John C. Meikle	198	Steam Trawler.	Richard Irvin & Sons Limited, Albert Quay, Aberdeen.
481	Thomas Young	198	Steam Trawler.	Richard Irvin & Sons Limited, Albert Quay, Aberdeen.

## Appendix H

### Aberdeen Free Press.

The Aberdeen Free Press was a weekly newspaper published from 1853 to 1922. From 1865, it was published twice-weekly. In 1872, it was published daily. In 1879, they also published the daily Evening Gazette. In November 1922, under the company Aberdeen Newspapers Limited it joined with the Daily Journal to become the Aberdeen Press and Journal and continued as a daily newspaper that still exists today. The Evening Gazette ceased in November 1922.

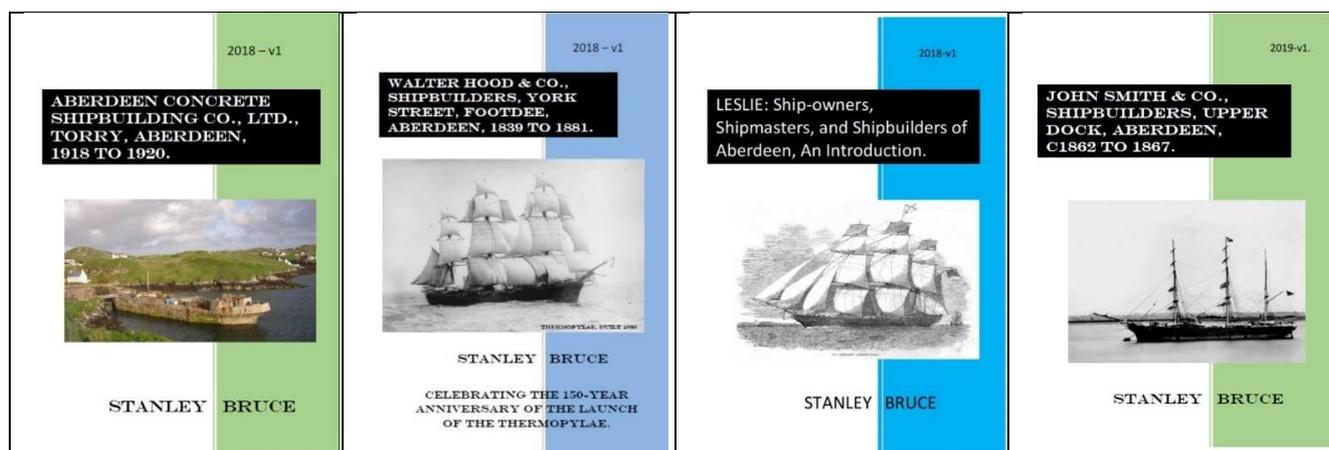
The following names and addresses of employees of the Aberdeen Free Press, office No. 30 Union Street, and printing works, Rosemount Press, Farmer's Hall Lane, were found in the 1909 / 1910 and 1910 / 1911 Aberdeen Post Office directories, so they may have worked on the story and / or printing the newspaper when '**Intaba**' was launched.

Name	Address	Position
Henry Alexander.	No. 43 Albyn Place.	Editor.
Henry Alexander Junior.	No. 1 Queens Cross.	-
John Bruce.	No. 1 Queens Road.	-
William Mackay.	No. 20 Duthie Terrace.	Reporter.
Alexander Marr.	No. 23 Carden Place.	Publisher.
H. G. Murray.	No. 15 Westburn Drive.	Cashier.
James Ogg.	No. 570 George Street.	Draughts Editor.
Thomas P. Gill.	No. 134 Pitstruan Place. (1909 / 1910). No. 134 Broomhill Road. (1910 / 1911).	Reporter.
A. Mauchan	No. 358 King Street.	Stereotyper.

## Further Books in this Series.

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

### Available online to date:



Aberdeen Concrete Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., Torry, Aberdeen, 1918 to 1920 (2018), 31 pages, No ISBN.

Walter Hood & Co., Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1839 to 1881 (2018), 220 pages, No ISBN.

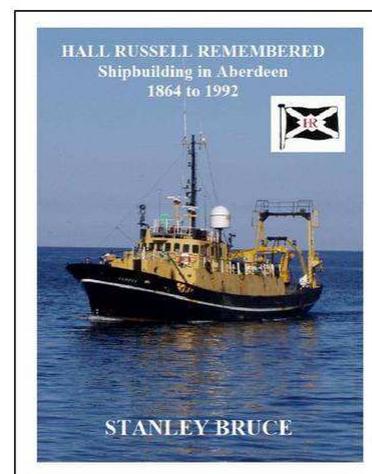
LESLIE: Ship-owners, Shipmasters, & Shipbuilders of Aberdeen (An Introduction) (2018), 150 pages, No ISBN.

John Smith & Co., Shipbuilders, Upper Dock, Aberdeen, c1862 to 1867 (2019), 47 pages, No ISBN.

## Other Shipbuilding Books by this Author.

Hall Russell Remembered, Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992, (2007), 36-pages, No ISBN. (Available to download as a pdf, free on [www.electricscotland.com](http://www.electricscotland.com)).

Hall Russell Remembered, Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992, rewritten and republished (2009), 56-pages, ISBN 9781907234026. (Out of print).



## **Other Books by this Author.**

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

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

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

Herring Fishing - Banff and Macduff, by Stanley Bruce and Malcolm Smith, (2011).  
ISBN 978-1-907234-06-4.

Along the Coast – Burghead to Portknockie, (2010). ISBN 978-1-907234-09-5.  
*Also available for the kindle.*

Along The Coast - Cullen to Pennan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (2010). ISBN 978-1-907234-08-8.  
*Also available for the kindle.*

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

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

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

Along the Coast – Pennan to St Fergus, (2009). ISBN 0-9547960-9-9. *Also available for the kindle.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Bard o' the Broch: A Celebration of Fraserburgh's Heritage, (2004).  
ISBN 0-954796013.

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

### **Other Books which include Work by this Author.**

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

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

The Book of Banff, by the Banff Preservation & Heritage Society, (2008).  
ISBN 978-1-841147-90-1.

### **Other Books Edited by this Author:**

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

The Herring Lassies – Following the Herring, by Rosemary Sanderson, (2008).  
ISBN 978-0-9547960-6-8. [Also available for the kindle.](#)

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

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

[www.poetrypoem.com](http://www.poetrypoem.com) BardofBanff.

And you'll find some of my shipbuilding poems on 'The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen' web  
page on [www.electricscotland.com](http://www.electricscotland.com)

THANKS FOR READING

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