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**JOHN WATSON,
SHIPBUILDER,
WHITEHILLS & BANFF
1830 TO 1879**



STANLEY BRUCE

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Cover photograph – Banff Harbour circa late 1890's with two topsail schooners.

This book has been published on an entirely non-profit basis and made available to all free of charge as a pdf. The aim of the book is to make the history of vessels built by **John Watson**, Banff available to a wider audience.

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

I can be contacted at bardofthebroch@yahoo.com

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

**JOHN WATSON,
SHIPBUILDER,
WHITEHILLS & BANFF,
1830 TO 1879.**

BY

STANLEY BRUCE

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First Digital Edition.

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

Please treat all dimensions as approximate.

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Introduction.

Today it's hard to imagine a small shipyard and sawmill located at Banff Harbour, it's even harder to imagine a 330-ton vessel on the slipway and launched into Banff's relatively small harbour. This was the largest vessel built by **John Watson**; she was a 3-masted barque named the '**Woodbine**' (330 tons OM) built for local owners in 1857. She was 114 feet long and the largest vessel ever built at Banff.

Vessels built by **John Watson** at Banff were known for being well-built, then again, all shipbuilders would say the same about their vessels, but not all shipbuilders have built a vessel that the press reported as '*unsinkable*'. The 58-year-old topsail schooner '**Amy**' (140 tons) built in 1870 by **John Watson** featured in a film about submarine warfare in 1928, and was sunk as a climax to the film, however according to the reports it took more than a submarine to sink her, they needed dynamite, paraffin on her sails, and a navy destroyer!

Inside this book you will find details of the vessels built by **John Watson**, press articles on the launches, and anything else interesting that I came across, including records of loss where found. I have noted ports of trade for information where I came across them, but I haven't delved very deep into this.

According to the Annals of Banff, in 1867 Banff had 114 vessels registered at the port with an annual tonnage of 9,180 tons, this gives an average vessel size for the period of 80 tons. As you are probably aware Banff Harbour could not accommodate such a fleet, most of these vessels spent most of their time at sea and many never returned to their place of birth, Banff Harbour.

The vessels built by **John Watson** at Banff Harbour were mostly schooners ranging from a mere 44 tons and circa 60 feet long to a decent sized 330 tons and 114 feet long. Most of these were built for local owners and used for the coastal trade or trade to the Baltic, however, some did venture further afield, some to the other side of the world.

A report dated 1836, states that 11,000 tons of general cargo was carried to London alone from Banff, chiefly grain, herrings, salmon, cured pork and live cattle, carried by ten to twelve vessels of 1,200 tons in total (average 100 / 120 tons each). The main import was coal; in 1879, 38,822 tons of coal was unloaded at Banff.

Trade to the Baltic was chiefly carrying barrels of salt-herrings, returning with timber, iron from Sweden, hemp from Russia, and flax from the Netherlands.

Much of the timber **John Watson** used for shipbuilding in Banff was transported by sea from the Baltic, primarily Baltic oak. Oak was also sourced locally, from England and America. Oak being a hardwood was very good for ship hulls and received a high classification from Lloyd's

Register of Shipping. Other timbers were used including larch and pine, sourced locally and from the Baltic and Canada.

The first vessel built by **John Watson** on the Banff Patent Slip was built speculatively and at her launch in 1850 was named the '**Zephyr**' by **John Watson**. **John Watson** built her hoping he would find a buyer for her either during her build or at completion. However, it seems that **John Watson** couldn't get a price for her, so he put her to sea himself. Unfortunately, she stranded and became a total loss, at only 2-years old.

The local press often referred to the vessels as 'Clipper Schooners', this is with reference to the design of the bow and fine lines of the hull. The first recognized 'Clipper' as they became to be known, was the 2-masted top-sail schooner the '**Scottish Maid**' (142 tons) launched by **Alexander Hall & Co.**, Shipbuilders, Footdee, Aberdeen in 1839. She was the first vessel to adorn what became to be known as the 'Aberdeen Bow'. The term 'clipper' is derived from a horse racing phrase '*Going at a good clip*', telling us that these vessels were fast sailers.

According to a press article from 1866 the '**Mayflower**' (182 tons) was about the 24th vessel built by **John Watson**, which ties in with my list I have prepared from scratch.

The press reports on **John Watson's** bankruptcy are quite lengthy, however they give some interesting details, so I have included them in their entirety. Reading these press articles, I'm surprised he never went bankrupt sooner.

His son **Alexander** who worked as his **foreman**, continued shipbuilding in Banff after **John Watson** went bust. **Alexander** took on the lease of the shipyard at Duffus Hillock, Banff in 1880, but he too was declared bankrupt 4-years later in 1884. The Duffus Hillock yard was located on the Low Shore opposite the former premises of Robertson's granary, since converted to flats, on the former site of the Banff Granite Works / Cheyne's auto body shop. (**John and William Geddie**, shipbuilders, built vessels at Duffus Hillock from 1865 to 1879).

William Geddie took the lease of the Banff harbour shipyard and slip in 1882, however he only built four vessels at the harbour, the last one being the two-masted schooner the '**Swift**' (71 tons) launched in 1895.

Unfortunately, due to the period **John Watson** operated as a shipbuilder, photography was still in its infancy and at the time very expensive, so there are very few photographs of the vessels he built. If anyone has any paintings, I'd be very grateful for a jpeg copy, and with this being a digital book they could easily be inserted into a later edition of this book.

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

Former shipbuilder, Hall Russell Ltd., Aberdeen, 1980 to 1991.

Ship Classification.

At this period classification symbols used by Lloyds Register of Shipping were as follows:

For the hull - A, Æ, E & I. (With A being the highest and I the lowest).

For equipment - 1 & 2. (With 1 being the highest).

Preceded by the number of years that class could be held.

The '**Glenboyn**' (1878/9) built by **John Watson** had a symbol of classification given by LRS as 11A1.

Meaning class could be held for 11-years.


The hull symbol 'A' is the highest hull symbol.

The equipment symbol '1' is the highest equipment symbol.

Most of the vessels built by **John Watson** were given a relatively high classification by Lloyds Register of Shipping for this period.

Built Under Special Survey.

At least eight of the vessels built by **John Watson** were '*Built under special survey*'. These surveys were carried out by surveyors employed by Lloyds Register of Shipping from 1853.

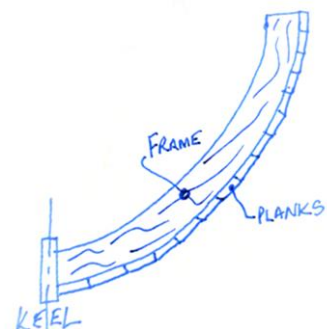
In Lloyds Register these vessels were given the symbol of the Formee or Maltese Cross . This signified the highest marine quality.

Anchors and Cables proved at a Public Machine (A&CP)

A&CP if stated in Lloyd's Register of Shipping aside the ship details, means a Lloyd's surveyor has witnessed these items being tested.

Carvel Construction.

In this method of shipbuilding, the keel is laid, the frames erected, then the planks fitted to the frames. The planks are fitted side-by-side and caulked in between. The deck beams are usually fitted after the hull shape is formed, followed by the deck(s).



Abbreviations.

The following abbreviations are used in this book:

A.B.S. Able Seaman.

GRT Gross Registered Tonnage.

LRS Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

OM Old Measurement, with reference to tonnage.

NGR National Grid Reference,

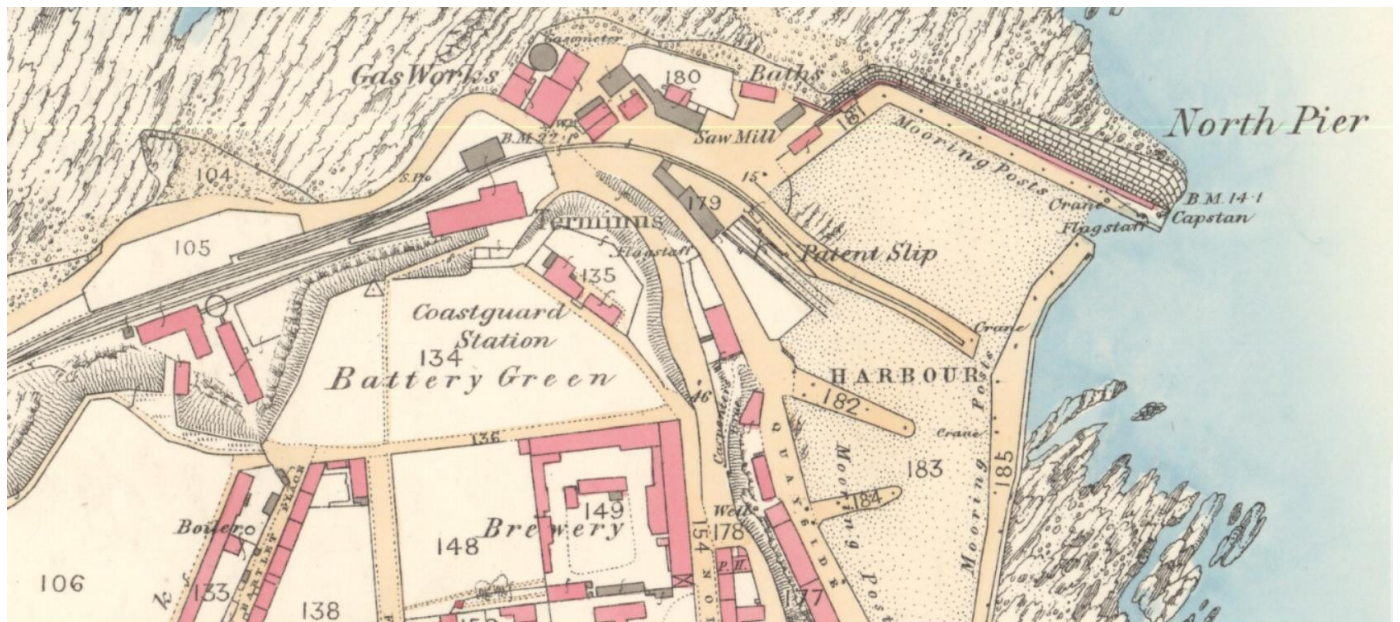
NM New Measurement, with reference to tonnage.

NNM New, New Measurement, with reference to tonnage.

Timeline.

c1806/1808: John Watson was born.

1830: John Watson commenced business as a boatbuilder at Whitehills, and according to a press report on his bankruptcy case in 1879 he was once a fisherman.



1867 / 1868 map Banff Harbour showing the location of the Patent Slip.

1836: The patent slip was installed in Banff Harbour with a lifting capacity of 200 tons.

The inventor of the Patent Slip was Thomas Morton (1781 to 1832) of Leith, he was a co-owner of **S. & H. Morton Shipbuilders and Engineers**. He served his time as a **shipwright** like

his father, and he worked for his father before starting his own shipbuilding business. His invention was designed and built in 1818, due to his necessity to get vessels out of the water to carry out ship-repair work. To repair a vessel, he was greasing ways and pulling it up, this was a time consuming and dangerous job. The Patent Slip is basically a cradle which is hauled up powered by a steam engine and a winch which hauls the vessel up out of the water on rail tracks. In 1819 Thomas Morton patented his design.

(See my book on **John Dick, shipbuilder, Banff**, which is free to download on www.electricscotland.com for more information on the Patent Slip).

1836, 18th May: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“The apparatus for completing the new Patent Slip at the Harbour of Banff, arrived there last week, and the work is going on with all expedition, and will speedily be completed. It is expected that this Patent Slip will prove a great accommodation to the shipping of the port, as well as to other vessels frequenting that part of the Moray Firth.”*

The first tenant of the Banff slip facility was **Robert Innes**, 1836 to 1837, then **John Dick**, 1838 to 1840, followed by **William Anderson** who held the lease until January 1843.

1837, 26th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published the following notice: *“**Patent Slip and Shipbuilding Yard at Banff** TO BE LET. THE PATENT SLIP and SHIPBUILDING YARD, lately erected at the Harbour of Banff, and as sometime possessed by **MR ROBERT INNES**, are to be let, for such number of years as may be agreed on, with immediate entry. The Slip is capable of drawing up vessels of Two Hundred Tons, old measurement, and the Yard affords accommodation, for building a large vessel, with a suitable space for depositing Wood, and also contains a covered SAW-PIT and other conveniences – the whole being enclosed with Stone Walls, six feet high. During **Mr INNES’S** occupancy, the Slip was in constant operation, and there being no similar convenience for repairing ships betwixt Aberdeen and Stromness, a Shipbuilder of enterprise and capital would find it a very eligible opening. For farther particulars, apply to JAMES SMITH, Townhouse, Banff. Banff, 20th July 1837.”*

It’s interesting to note that there wasn’t another Patent Slip nearby, the slip at Fraserburgh wasn’t installed until 1842, so the operators of the Banff Slip prior to this date had a monopoly on local ship-repair work. The nearest slips were at Inverness (Erected by 1829) and Aberdeen (Also erected in 1836).

1838, 22nd August: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published the following advertisement: *“**MORTON’S PATENT SLIP, BANFF.** In reference to a paragraph, which appeared in the Journal lately, with regard to the Patent Slip here, I, as Tacksman of the same, am highly gratified with the employment I have received from the Shipping interest in this quarter, and I trust my work has proved satisfactory. The ease and safety with which Vessels can now be repaired has only*

to be seen. And as to dispatch, it shall be my most earnest study to forward the interests of my employers. Banff, August 9, 1838. T. Dick.”

1840, 15th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“Shipbuilding-Yard, and Patent Slip. AT THE HARBOUR OF BANFF, TO BE LET. THE SHIPBUILDING-YARD and PATENT SLIP, at the Harbour of Banff, as presently possessed by Mr John Dick, are to be let, for such period as may be agreed on from and after the 2nd January next.**

Besides the necessary recommendation for the Slip, the Yard contains sufficient space for building a vessel of considerable burden; also, a Sawpit, with Loft above, and accommodation for laying down timber – the whole enclosed within substantial stone walls.

The Slip, which was laid down in 1836, is in excellent order, and capable of taking on Vessels of the burden of 200 tons, O.M. It has hitherto been well employed: and as the number of vessels belonging to Banff has increased very rapidly of late, and still continues to increase, and there being no similar convenience for repairing Ships in the Moray Firth, a tenant of enterprise would find the present opening worthy of his attention. Scaled offers will be received by JAMES SMITH, TOWN-HOUSE, Banff, until WEDNESDAY the 9th September next, when they will be opened in presence of all interested: and, in the meantime, further particulars may be learned, on application to the said JAMES SMITH.

Banff, 9th July 1840.”

1840, 16th December: An advertisement in the Aberdeen Press and Journal offered some shares for sale and amongst them was 2 shares in the **Banff Morton Patent Slip Company.**

1841, 17th February: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on four remarkable occurrences at Boyndie by Banff. One of these was the launch of a fine schooner on Saturday 13th February at Blackpots Harbour. This was followed on Monday evening the 15th February by a ‘*numerously attended Ball*’ which took place in Whitehills. At the Ball an elderly gentleman stated that at the age of fifteen he assisted in planting the wood on the hills of Boyndie of which the vessel was built. Unfortunately, the article did not state who built the vessel, who it was built for, or the vessels name. **John Watson** was building vessels at Whitehills at this date, so it’s very likely that he built this one.

1843, 1st February: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“Banff Patent Slip to Let, AND SHIPPING MATERIALS FOR SALE. The whole shipbuilding materials belonging to the trustees of Wm. Anderson, Tennant of the Banff Patent Slip, will be sold, by Public Roup, and without reserve, on Tuesday 7th February next; the Sale to begin at noon. They consist of Baltic Framing Oak Timber, sided; Scots Oak; Pine Plank; Tar; Pitch; Resin; Varnish; Dantzic Treenails, etc. Also, an excellent Bogie and a Boat. At the same time, the SLIP and YARD will be let for the current year, ending 2nd January 1844, and, if suitable Rent is given, the terms will be**

prolonged for other four years, with liberty to the Tennant to quit at the expiry of any one year, on giving six months' notice in writing. There being no other Patent Slip within a great distance, it is almost sure to be occupied with numerous repairs, and seldom can a more promising opportunity offer, for an active, well qualified shipbuilder, possessed of moderate capital, especially in the present dull state of trade. The slip is capable of receiving three Vessels at once."

1844 to 1848: I could not find who had the lease of Banff Patent Slip and shipyard at this period, however as follows, ship-repair was being carried out. By 1848, the **Banff Morton's Slip Company** according to the advertisement below were charging for temporary lets of the slip for ship repair work.

1845, 19th February: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported that the '**Jean Sinclair**' of Sutherland, which had suffered damage in Macduff Harbour in a recent gale was put on the Banff Patent Slip for repairs. She had several of her bottom planks taken out and re-caulked.

PATENT SLIP.

THE BANFF MORTON'S SLIP COMPANY
 having resumed possession of their Slip and Yard,
 will LET the same Temporarily to Persons wishing to
 Clean or Repair Vessels, at the following Rates of
 Dues:—

First Day—2*l.* per Register Ton.
 Next Fourteen Days—1*d.* per do.
 Every Lawful Day thereafter— $\frac{1}{2}$ *l.* per do.
 The charge in no case to be less than 10*s.* 6*d.*
 in whole.

The Slip takes up Vessels not exceeding Two Hun-
 dred Tons O.M.

The conditions will be shown by JAMES SMITH,
 Clerk to the Company, with whom Vessels may be
 Entered for the Slip.

BANFF, June 19, 1848.

Advertisement in the Banffshire Journal, Tuesday 27th June 1848.

PATENT SLIP.—SHIP-BUILDING.

THE SUBSCRIBER begs to intimate that he has
 taken the PATENT SLIP at the Banff Har-
 bour, where he intends carrying on SHIP-BUILD-
 ING, and that he is ready to take on Vessels for
 Repairs.

JOHN WATSON.

BANFF, Nov. 22, 1848.

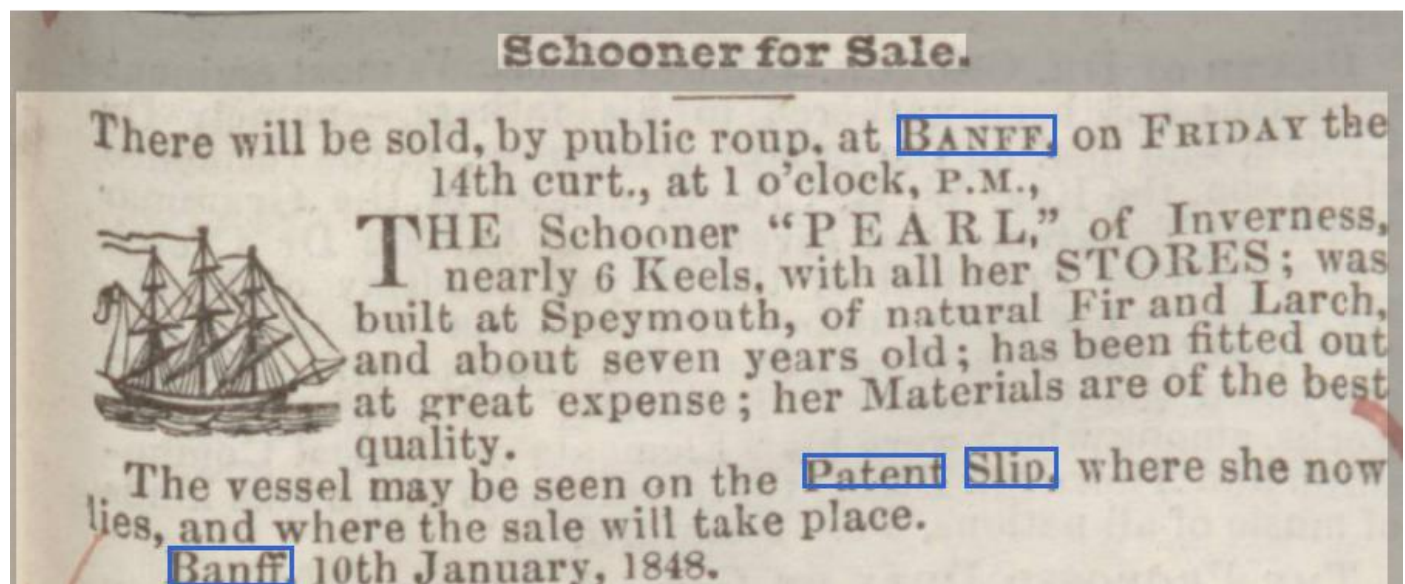
Banffshire Journal - Tuesday 28th November 1848.

1848, 28th November: The Banffshire Journal reported as follows: *“FOR SALE, BY PRIVATE BARGAIN, FINE SCHOONER, 54 Tons N.M., at present building at Blackpots, by Banff. For particulars, apply to **Mr John Watson**, Shipbuilder, Banff.*

The above schooner seems to be the ‘**Hero**’ launched in 1849, and bought by Mr Bartlett, brewer, Banff.

1848, November: **John Watson** established himself as a shipbuilder at Banff, when he took the lease of the harbour shipyard and patent slip, and in early 1849 ceased building vessels at Whitehills. During his first two years at Banff, he worked solely on ship-repair work. His first vessel built at Banff was the 2-masted schooner ‘**Zephyr**’, (108 tons), launched 30th July 1850.

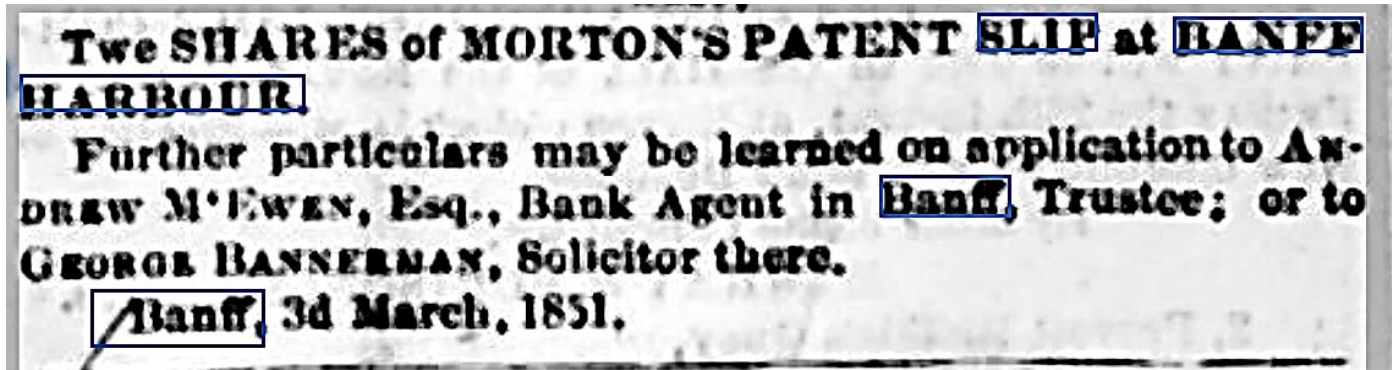
1848, 12th January: *The Aberdeen Press and Journal published the following advertisement for the sale of the schooner ‘**Pearl**’ of Inverness:*



It’s interesting to note that she was being sold on the Banff Patent Slip. It’s likely that **John Watson** had done some repair work on her prior to the sale, or at least had an inspection of her hull carried out.

1849, 4th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“**BANFF HARBOUR.** – We are glad to notice that for a very long period the patent slip at the harbour, rented by **Mr John Watson**, has been in active requisition. At Present **Mr Watson** is building on speculation, a very fine oak schooner, of 80 or 90 tons.”* (The schooner was later named the ‘**Zephyr**’ (108 tons)).

1850, 18th June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“**BANFF HARBOUR.** —Morton's patent slip at the harbour has been again let for lease of seven years, to the former tenant, **Mr John Watson**, shipbuilder.”*



Advertisement for the sale of two shares in the Morton Patent Slip at Banff Harbour.
 (Aberdeen Herald, 15th March 1851).

1853, 6th December: The Banffshire Journal reported as follows: **"PATENT SLIP AT HARBOUR.** A suggestion of some alterations on the rails of the Patent Slip at the harbour was submitted by Mr Watson, superintendent of harbour works. The alterations were submitted with a view to making the slip competent to receive larger ships than at present. Mr Watson stated that it could only take on ships of 200 tons, and he thought with laying out a comparatively trifling expense in carrying out the suggested alterations, they would be enabled to receive ships of 400 or 500 tons. Mr McEwen said that the Patent Slip had not proved a very remunerative speculation for the shareholders; but he thought if the proposed improvements could be carried out at a moderate expense, there might yet be some prospect of more liberal dividends in future. Mr Scott said he was of opinion that nothing more than taking an estimate of the probable expense could be done until a meeting of the shareholders was called, in order to ascertain whether or not they would give their assent to the present proposals. Mr Scott's observation seemed to meet general approval, and it was remitted to Mr Watson to prepare a statement of the probable expense of the proposed changes."

1857, 23rd June: The Banffshire Journal published an advertisement for the sale of two shares of the **BANFF PATENT SLIP COMPANY**. "Apply to Mr Coutts, Solicitor."

1857, 1st December: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"THE 'OPHELIA' OF BANFF.** The 'Ophelia' still lies in the same position alongside the Macduff pier. It is supposed that she may be got off with comparatively little damage, and we may add that **Mr Watson**, shipbuilder, has engaged for a certain sum to take her across to the slip at Banff harbour, and had men employed on her all day yesterday."

1859: The Banff, Portsoy and Strathisla Railway came to Banff Harbour.

1859, 28th June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"BANFF – WOOD TRADE.** – The spirit with which our Banff Sawmill Company are going into this trade deserves a passing notice. In Banff harbour there are at present no fewer than four Norwegian ships with wood for the Company, making the total quantity which has been landed for them during what has been landed for them during what has passed of the season, nine cargoes.

Besides the men temporarily employed in unloading these ships, there are at present ten to twelve required in connection with the mills, two saws being at work regularly; while for a considerable part of the season, the work has continued from five in the morning till eight at night. The Company deserve support from the town and neighbourhood, at least, for the employment they give to the working people, not to speak of the increase of shore dues from their importations, and it is likely they deserve also the support of the public generally, else they would not be favoured with so large a share of it."

The sawmill at Banff Harbour was very busy at this period; part of their work would have been cutting wood for **John Watson** who at this period was building a large vessel of 196 tons N.N.M. which I believe was the brig '**Perserverance**'.

1860, 17th April: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"TRAMWAY TO THE HARBOUR.** *The Committee appointed by the Council to act along with a Committee of the Harbour Trustees, with reference to the harbour, reported that they had to recommend the Council to approve of the proposal to take a portion of the ground held by the Slip Company, no reduction being made in the rent paid by the Slip Company, and no responsibility attaching to the Council, the ground being on the same terms as formerly – that is, that the Town Council may resume possession at any time, on paying the value of the works laid down."*

1860, August: A Lifeboat was sent to Banff, and subsequently a Lifeboat House was built at Banff Harbour. (See my book titled '*Banff and Macduff Lifeboat, The Early Years, 1860 to 1877*', free to download on www.electricscotland.com for more information).

1860, 22nd May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"TRAMWAY FROM BANFF RAILWAY STATION TO THE HARBOUR.** – *The Banff Harbour Trustees, at a meeting on Saturday last, accepted the offer of Mr Thurburn, railway contractor, for the formation of the tramway from the Banff station of the Strathisla Railway along the old north quay of the harbour. The sum for which Mr Thurburn offers to do the work is £205 11s. 3d. The Trustees, in addition to this, have to supply the rails, which it is understood will cost about £90. The money required for the work will thus be £295 11s. 3d., which is very near the estimate made up by Mr Keir, C.E., who made the plan of the tramway..."*

1865, 23rd February: The Inverness Courier reported as follows: **"MAN DROWNED AT BANFF.** – *Mr Walker, of the Royal Oak Hotel, Banff, was drowned in the harbour there on Tuesday evening week, his body having been found by some workmen at the Slip on Wednesday morning. Mr Walker was in the habit of taking a walk at night along the harbour side, and the night in question being dark, it is conjectured that he had accidentally fallen into the water. The tide being back, he must have been so stunned by the fall (alighting most probably on his head) that he was unable to call for assistance, and so had perished. Mr Walker was a kind*

and genial landlord and an obliging neighbour. He leaves a wife and family to lament his untimely end."

1866, 17th July: John Watson, shipbuilder was appointed to the local committee of the Royal National Lifeboat Association, the Earl of Fife was re-elected as president.

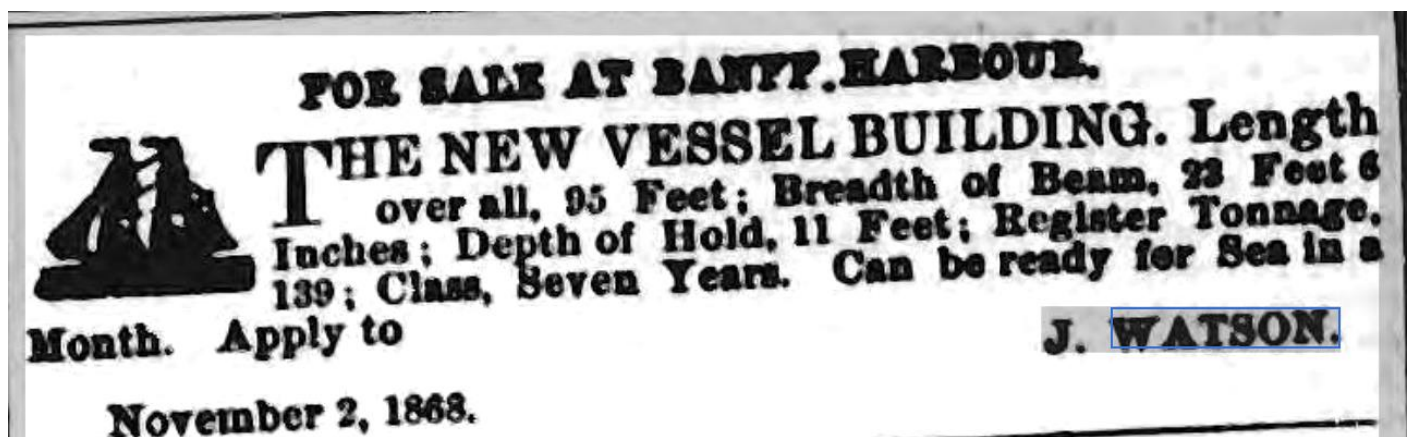
1867: The Banff and Macduff Lifeboat house was moved to the east side of the Brig o' Banff.

1868, 3rd November: Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: "**BANFF TOWN COUNCIL.** – A meeting of the Town Council was held in the Courthouse, Banff, on Saturday forenoon. Provost Wood occupied the chair, and there were present – Baillie Adamson, Councilors G. W. Murray, John Forbes, and Alexander Watson. A statement to be submitted to the Head Court was submitted and approved. An application was read from **Mr Watson**, shipbuilder, requesting to have possession of the piece of ground on which the lifeboat house formerly stood, to use as a shipbuilding yard. The Provost, Baillie Adamson, Councilors Watson and Murray were appointed to enquire and report as to the terms on which the ground should be given."

The new Banff and Macduff lifeboat house was built at the east side of Banff Bridge in 1877, using stones from the Banff Harbour building which was taken down. The exact location of the lifeboat house at Banff Harbour is unknown, however according to the above it must have been near the patent slip.

The 1868 map shows railway lines from Banff Railway Station leading down to the harbour, on the pier adjacent to the north side of the Patent Slip.

1868, 17th November: The following advertisement for a New Vessel Building, FOR SALE was published in the Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser. This vessel was built speculatively and is probably the 'Forward' launched 13th February 1869.



FOR SALE AT BANFF HARBOUR.

THE NEW VESSEL BUILDING. Length over all, 95 Feet; Breadth of Beam, 23 Feet 6 Inches; Depth of Hold, 11 Feet; Register Tonnage, 139; Class, Seven Years. Can be ready for Sea in a Month. Apply to **J. WATSON.**

November 2, 1868.

1872: It is interesting to note that the Lloyds Surveyor in Banff at this date was Alexander Linton, father of **Hercules Linton** who was the designer of the 3-masted clipper ship 'Cutty Sark' (963 tons). (**Hercules Linton** born at Inverbervie, served his apprenticeship at **Alexander Hall & Co.**, Shipbuilders, Footdee, Aberdeen).

1874, 6th November: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: *“BANFF. – SHIPBUILDING. – Shipbuilding appears to be fast becoming one of the chief industries of Banff. The Messrs. Geddie have but recently launched a fine vessel for Macduff owners, and Messrs. Watson have one well advanced, and the ‘May Flower’, of this port – one of the finest vessels they have ever built, - on the slip, undergoing a thorough renovation. Mr Watson, senior., complains much that his business is restricted for want of room; and certainly, his yard though otherwise very convenient, does appear to be a little hampered. He is to lay down a new vessel on the slip as soon as the ‘May Flower’ is off and might lay down several others did space permit. While the business is this prosperous at Banff, we observe that it is so slack on the Clyde and at Sunderland that a reduction of 15 percent, in the wage of the hands has been spoke of, if it has not actually been made. The pity is that no capable shipbuilder has located himself at Portsoy, where ample yard room might be found.”*

It seems to my mind, myself being used to working in an Aberdeen shipyard of 13 acres, that the Banff Harbour yard was indeed incredibly small. Building a ship takes a lot of planning and organizing the delivery and storage of materials. Of course, vessels were less complicated back then, but space would still have been needed to store materials, perhaps the sawmill conveniently situated next door stored and cut most of the timber.

1876, 15th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“ELECTION OF HARBOUR TRUSTEES. – The annual election of trustees for the Banff Harbour concluded on Thursday afternoon at four o’clock. The election lasts for two days, the shipowners’ trustees having been elected on Wednesday, and the traders’ trustees on Thursday. Very little interest is taken in the election, and, generally, only a very few votes are recorded. The mode adopted in voting is that each person entitled to vote gives in a signed list to the persons voted for. The gentlemen elected as shipowners’ trustees were Messrs. John W. Simpson, shipowner, etc., Robert Morrison, merchant, George Shearer, clothier, and John Watson, shipbuilder. The only change is the election of Mr Watson in place of Mr Henry Munro. The traders’ trustees elected were Messrs. George Reid and Wm. Watson, merchant, the former trustees.”*

1877, 30th January: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“ACCIDENT AT BANFF. – On the forenoon of Tuesday, the trunk of a large tree was being drawn by a horse and buggy through the town of Banff to the shipbuilding yard at the harbour. The men in charge attempted to allow the vehicle to run down the declivity at Collie Road to Low Street, and they proved unable to control its course. The log was passing swiftly in the direction of the house next the Fife Arms Hotel. Its course was, however, altered in the opposite direction, but the log came violently against the railing in front of the Court House. The iron railing and one half of the gate were broken, and the dwarf wall upon which the railing is fixed was knocked down. The injury extended to about five yards of the wall and railing. The noise of the collision and overthrow of the wall and railing caused some alarm.*

*Two men in charge of the load were in the employment of **Messrs. John Watson & Son**, shipbuilders. Measures were at once taken for having the damage repaired.”*

The following articles give us a lot of information about **John Watson**, shipbuilder, regarding losses on vessels he built, etc.

1879, 12th April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“BANFF BANKRUPTCY COURT. EXAMINATION OF JOHN WATSON, SHIPBUILDER.** *John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff, was examined in the Banff Bankruptcy Court, on Thursday, before Sheriff Watson in bankruptcy. There were present, Mr Alex. Duncan, trustee; Mr Morrison, solicitor, Banff, agent for the trustee; Mr Watt, solicitor, Banff for Messrs. McConnachie & Ironside, creditors; and Mr Hossack, solicitor, for the bankrupt. The Bankrupt, having been sworn and examined by Mr Morrison – I am 71 years of age. I am married. I began business as a boatbuilder in Whitehills in 1830, and was in business there for 18 years. I had a capital of £30 or £40. I also dealt in coals, and went to the herring fishing during that period. I built three ships while in business at Whitehills. My business was profitable at Whitehills. I left Whitehills in 1848 and came to Banff for the purpose of carrying on the trade of shipbuilder. I had a capital of £632. I also sold property in Whitehills for £100, which I added to my capital, making it in all £732. During the first two years that I was in Banff my business consisted principally of repairing old ships. I was doing very well at that trade. The first ship I built in Banff was the ‘Zephyr’, which was 106 tons burden. I did not get her sold before putting her to sea. The total value of the vessel was £1,600. I got my friends to take half of the vessel and I retained the other half myself. Twelve months after, the vessel was lost. I lost £700 upon her, the vessel not being insured save to the extent of £100. I had no advances at that time from any of the banks. I continued to work at repairs on a small scale, which was profitable. I also after a time resumed building new ships. I built a vessel called the ‘Woodbine’ to contract, and lost by her, but by how much I cannot say. It was at any rate £100. This was the year that the Russian war broke out in the Crimea, and after I contracted there was a rise in the price of timber, to the extent of 6? per foot. After this I continued to repair old ships, and to build new ones when I got contracts. I made fair average profits. I built a vessel called the ‘Perseverance’ on my own account. The vessel lay on the stocks 15 months before I got her sold. I lost about £200 upon that ship. I had to raise money on a bill, and in consequence of it falling due before the ship was sold, I had to dispose of her at a low figure. This was about eight years after I came to Banff, and two years after I built the ‘Woodbine’. Soon after this I became acquainted with the late Mr Calder, Forres, and built seven ships for him alone. I got payment for each ship in installments. What were your average yearly profits up to 1870? - I estimate them from £80 to £120, but one year I made £200. This did not include my household expenditure, which would be about £65 a year. In 1870, I estimated I would have been worth £1,300. That was made up as follows: = In bank, £200; house property, £600; stock in trade, £300; shipping, £200 – total, £1,300. In that year I built a vessel called the ‘**Agnes M. Gordon**’. She had a*

registered tonnage of 126. Of that vessel my son-in-law George Steele had a half; my son-in-law Captain Storm had one-eighth; my son **Alex. Watson** one-eighth; my son George Watson one-eighth, and I had one-eighth myself. She cost £1,150, hull and spars only. That vessel was paid by a bill for £700 granted by the owners. The balance was paid out of the proceeds of a former vessel named the '**Forward**', which belonged to the same owners in the following proportions: - George Steele, one-half; Robert Storm, one-eighth; **Alex. Watson** one-eighth; James and George Watson, one-eighth between them; and myself one-eighth. George Watson's share of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**' really belonged to himself and his brother James, though it did not appear in the register, George Steele retired the bill for £100 in Macduff out of the proceeds of the ships. Steele also, as managing owner, provided the sails and anchors. These were paid out of the ships earnings. I sold my share of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**' some time afterwards to my brother, James Watson, Whitehills, for £190. I got cash. The date of the sale was 28th February 1872. The cash was paid at different times. I applied the money to my business. I got no money from my brother previous to the above date. The sale at first was in security, but it was an out and out sale after. I now explain that when the bill of sale was granted I got the sum as a loan, but when I found that I could not repay my brother it was agreed that the sale would be an out and out one, and the money was paid on the 28th February 1872. This bill ceased to be a security on 29th March 1877. The said vessel was profitable till 1875. The dividends between 1872 and 1875 went to reduce the bill at the bank and to pay insurance. Up to 1875 I examined and signed the ship's book kept by Mr Steele, as managing owner, and was present at the meetings of the owners. After 1875, and up to the present time, there has been a loss of £1,000 on the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. In 1871 I built a vessel called the '**Flower of Banff**', which was 128 tons burden. The contract price of the hull and spars was £1,100. The original owners of the '**Flower of Banff**' were my son-in-law (John Masson), who had one-eighth; my son (**Alex. Watson**), who, I think, had one-eighth; and my cousin (Henry Watson, Whitehills), who I think, had two sixteenths. My son-in-law, George Steele, and George Ritchie, shipbuilder, had also shares, but I cannot say how many. I had an eighth myself. I cannot tell whether Henry Munro had a share. I had nothing to do with the ropes, sails, and anchors of the ship. I have no share of the vessel now. I sold it on the same date that I sold my share of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**' to my brother, James Watson, Whitehills, for £190, which I got some time before 28th February 1872. The transaction was intended as a security, and it became an out-and-out sale on the 20th March 1877. On that date the bill of sale was registered in the Custom-House, Banff, and I was present. I cannot say if I was then solvent. My brother James got the dividends from the date of the bills of sale down to 1877, and since, and it was my brother who suggested that the bills of sale should be recorded. Shown cash book, depones – That does not contain all my transactions, but it contains everything in connection with my trade. The money I got from my brother for the two ships previously spoken about is not entered in the said book. I was paid in cash for the '**Flower of**

Banff. *I built a ship named the 'John Watson' in 1875 of 220 tons burden. The price of the vessel was £3,400 for everything, including hull, sails, ropes and spars. I took one-eighth of that ship myself, which I still hold. Eighteen sixty-fourths were registered originally in my name, but of these, six belonged to my son James, and four to my son David, to whom I transferred them. Of the price of the ship, £1,800 was paid by bill, and the balance was paid in cash. I was the drawer of the bill. The acceptors were George Steele, **Alex. Watson, John Watson**, and James Watson. That bill has been renewed from time to time, and part of it is still current. I think the bill has been reduced to £300. The parties now on the bill are only myself, as drawer: George Steele, and my son, **Alexander Watson**, as acceptors. The bill is at the North of Scotland Bank, Macduff. Interrogated – You estimate yourself worth £1,300 in 1870, and your state of affairs shows a deficiency of £1,853, or a total loss since 1870 of £3,153. How do you explain these losses? – I estimate my loss (1) by the difference in trade, and the rise of wages; (2) the rise on timber; (3) too much rent for the slip; also my own keep, insurance premiums on property, and interest for advances during the last three or four years. I have never made any large losses since 1870. I lost some small accounts, amounting from £20 to £30. I cannot tell what I was worth in 1871, or in any one year since; but I made a loss every year since 1870. I first discovered that I was insolvent about three years ago. It may have been less than three years since I made the discovery. I made up a trial balance-sheet, and, after deducting the value of my property, I found I was about 300 short. I did not preserve said balance sheet. On the motion of Mr Watt, the examination was continued until Monday."*

1879, 15th April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **"BANFF BANKRUPTCY COURT. CONTINUED EXAMINATION OF JOHN WATSON, SHIPBUILDER.** *The examination in bankruptcy of John Watson, shipbuilder in Banff, was continued yesterday in the Banff Courthouse in presence of Sherriff Watson. There were present – Mr Duncan, banker, trustee on the estate; Mr Morrison, solicitor, Banff, agent for the trustee; Mr Alex. Watt, solicitor, Banff for Messrs. McConnachie & Ironside, creditors; and Mr G. M. Hossack, solicitor, Banff for the bankrupt. The Bankrupt, having been sworn, deponed – I wish to explain that, when I said that I first discovered I was insolvent three years ago, I should have said that I made that discovery in 1873. Since that time, I have been losing money every year. By Mr Watt – My sons are Alexander and George, both ship carpenters in Banff; James, shipping clerk, London; John, clerk. Leek, Staffordshire; and David Findlay Watson, commercial traveler in London, whose address I cannot now tell, but will furnish to my trustee. My sons-in-law are Robert Storm, master of the ship '**John Watson**'; George Steele, baker, Banff; and John Masson, master of the '**Fairwind**'. My son Alexander owns eight shares of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'; four shares of the '**John Watson**'; and 18 shares of the '**Fairwind**'. The '**Fairwind**' that I am speaking of is the second vessel of that name. My son Alexander had eight shares of the former one. My son James owns eight shares of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**', and ten shares of the '**John Watson**'. My son-in-law Steele had 32 shares of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**', and 12 of the*

'John Watson'. He held eight shares of the **'Forward'**. My son-in-law Robert Storm holds eight shares of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'**, and six shares of the **'John Watson'**. He held eight shares of the **'Forward'**. My son-in-law Masson holds 12 shares of the **'Fairwind'**, and held eight shares of the **'Forward'**. I once held eight shares of each of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'**, **'The Flower of Banff'** and the **'John Watson'**. My shares of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'** and the **'Flower of Banff'** were transferred, as I have already stated to my brother James, and the eight shares of the **'John Watson'** still in my name form all the shipping that I ever possessed. Although I owned only eight shares of the **'John Watson'**, 18 were registered in my name. Six belonged to my son James, which were transferred to him, and four to my son David, which also were transferred to his name. I never had any share of the **'Fairwind'** which was last built. Interrogated – Shown a copy of the register of **'Forward'**, and asked if the 16 shares of that vessel registered in his name belonged to him: - They must have been mine when they are there. As far as I can recollect, they continued to be mine down to the date when the ship was lost in August 1869. I did not sell any of these shares so far as I remember. Interrogated – Did you give away any of these shares to anyone for nothing? – No. Did you ever sell any of these shares privately? – No. That being so, and as no sale or transfer of said shares appears in the ship's register, are you satisfied that you did not sell any of these shares either publicly or privately? – I must be satisfied, or else they would have been in the Custom-House books. I built the **'Forward'** myself under contract. The parties to the contract were myself as seller, and my son **Alexander**, and my sons-in-law Storm and Steele, who were with myself to be owners. The contract was not made in writing. I cannot tell where it was made, or anything particular in connection with the making of it. Storm was wanting a ship. I was ordered to build a ship, but whether I fixed a price, or whether I was to charge what I liked when she was finished, I cannot tell. I cannot tell whether the new contract was for the hull and spars only or for the ship complete and ready for sea. The ship was built and lost in 1869, and was 150 tons register. In examining my cash book I am able to see that the **'Forward'** cost £1,600, and that I furnished the vessel complete for that sum. I was paid by the co-owners for the vessel in two instalments. I was paid by a bill for £1,000, and by cash £600. The bill was by the owners of the vessel to me. I discounted the bill in the North of Scotland Bank in Macduff. I did not keep an ordinary bank account there. My reasons for discounting in Macduff was that my co-owners kept their bank account there. I point out in my cash book an entry of said £1,000, under date "1869, February 26, by Steele and others, £1,000," and another entry showing the discount paid by me was £50 8s 3d, and that I paid into my ordinary bank account in Banff £950 on said date. The balance of the price of the **'Forward'**, £600, was paid out of the price of the first **'Fairwind'**. That vessel was sold to Mr William Paterson, Wanford, for £632. I was managing owner of the first **'Fairwind'** before the sale. In that capacity I kept an account of the receipts and disbursements of the vessel from the time she was built until she was sold. That book is in my drawer in my office locked up. My trustee applied to me to deliver

up all the books and papers, and I gave him all in connection with my business. I did not give up the book because I did not think it had anything to do with my business, but I will now give it up. It was as managing owner that I received the price of the first 'Fairwind', and I applied £600 of it to myself as payment of the balance of the price of the 'Forward'. Interrogated – Seeing that the 'Fairwind' belonged to six owners in certain proportions, and that the 'Forward' belonged to four owners in different proportions (for example Mr Steele held 16 shares of the 'Fairwind' while he held 32 of the 'Forward'), how did you come to take part of the price 'Fairwind' to pay part of the price of the 'Forward'? – Everyone who had a share of the 'Fairwind' had his proportion taken and put on the 'Forward'. Did William Storm, who owned eight shares of the first 'Fairwind', and George Watson, who also owned eight shares of the vessel, receive their proportions of the price? – William Storm, I think, sold his shares to George Steele before the sale to Mr Paterson, and the shares of my sons George and James really belonged to them, and the proportion of the price thereof was put into the next vessel. Mr Steele just paid the proportion he got of the price of the 'Fairwind'. Interrogated – Mr Steele's proportion of the price of the 'Fairwind' being £158, and the proportion which he had to pay of the £600, being £300, whence came the difference of £142 Mr Steele paid? Did he pay by cheque or by bill? – He paid in cash, but whether in cash or in bank notes I cannot tell. The balance of the price of the 'Fairwind' is not credited in my cash book. The £200 credited in the bank book dated 6th March must be part of the balance. I must have used the balance to pay accounts. I cannot show the disposal of the balance, in the meantime, from my cash book or my bank book. When the £1,000 bill came to maturity it was paid by Steele, the managing owner., from the proceeds of the vessel after she was lost. She was insured, but I cannot tell for how much. Steele recovered the insurance. It was more than £1,000. I think the insurance was for £1,500. I did not get from Steele my proportion of the £500. I never asked it. He put it on to the 'Agnes M. Gordon'. The 'Forward's' book is in Steele's possession. There was no contract for the 'Agnes M. Gordon'. I just charged for the hull and spars what I thought right. The ropes and sails of that vessel were supplied by Henry Munro, Banff. The anchors and chains I bought from Lumsden & Co., Sunderland, but Mr Steele paid for these and for the ropes and sails. The 'Agnes M. Gordon' was paid in part by the £700 bill before referred to; partly by the £500 balance of the 'Forward', and by the earnings of the vessel from which the £700 bill was also paid, so that, with the exception of the £500 out of the 'Forward', she has all been paid out of her own profits. As George Watson had no share of the 'Forward', of the proceeds of which vessel £500 was applied to pay the 'Agnes M. Gordon', of which George had eight shares, how did he pay his proportion of the £500; - My son James paid to me his brother George's proportion of the £500, being £62 10s. There is no entry of that payment in my cash book, but it is included in the following entry therein, viz: - "1869 – Feb. 21. – G. Steele, £530." Being asked to explain how a sum paid by his son James is included in a payment by the son-in-law George Steele, depones – I now say that my son James did not

pay me. He paid Steele, who paid me. Interrogated – You have already deponed that the price of the hull and spars of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'** was £1,150, of which you received £700 by bill, and the balance of £450 out of the proceeds of the **'Forward'**; does the £550 credit included the £450 balance? – Yes; and also the said sum received from my son, but I cannot explain the difference. Interrogated – Seeing that the **'Forward'** was not lost till August 1869, and that the proceeds of her insurance could not have been recovered until after that date, how could you have received from Steele £550 on 21st February 1869, out of said such proceeds? – I now explain that the entry of £550 above quoted is part of the price of the **'Forward'**, and not of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'**, nor does it include the money paid to me by my son. I cannot find in my cash book at all the entry of the payment of said sum by my son James. I cannot remember the date on which I got the sum, but I will search the cash book, and if I find an entry I will point it out to my trustee. Interrogated and asked to point out from his cash book the credit of the £700 bill, less discount, and the £450, making together the price of the hull and spars of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'**? – Deponer – I point out two entries as follows, viz. – “1876, June 12th, new ship, £400; July 14th, new ship, £400.” I got these two sums in cash, but there is no entry in my cash book of the receipt of the balance of said price. I got these two sums as part of the price. I can give no explanation why the balance of said price is not entered in my cash book, but I am quite sure I got the money, and that I applied it in payment of my debts. The original value of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'** was between £1,600 and £1,700. Steele kept a book of the ship's receipts and disbursements, which I saw about three years after she was built. This was at a meeting of owners. There was no meeting until that time, by which time the vessel had been fully paid up from her own earnings. I believe that all renewals of the £700 bill were also discounted in the North of Scotland Bank in Macduff. I think there were annual meetings held after the first one, which I attended on behalf of my brother James, who was not personally present. I got the dividends in 1874 and 1875. There has been no dividend since 1875. I do not know why some of Steele's shares were transferred to John Kemp, and retransferred to him. The reason why James's shares of the **'Agnes M. Gordon'** were originally registered in **John Watson's** name was that my son James was in the Custom-House and could not hold shares, but when he left the Custom-House they were transferred to him. The sum of £190 which I got on loan from my brother James I think he paid me at different times prior to the date of the transfer. I applied to my said brother for assistance because I had difficulty in meeting claims which were made upon me. I thought myself solvent at that time. I had previously borrowed from Cassie's trustees through Mr Robertson, Macduff, £400 on the security of my house in North Castle Street, Banff, which is credited in my bank account in 1870. At the time I borrowed from my brother I had no property on which I could borrow except my shipping. My bank account was then on the right side. I think my brother paid me by money, not by cheque. There is no record in my books of a receipt of the money. I gave my brother receipts at or about the time I got the money. I cannot tell why the bill of sale was not

*executed at the date of the last payment. My brother gave me a back letter telling me the nature of the transaction. He did not ask a bill from me. It was in my brother's option at any time to register the transfer and make himself owner or give back the transfer. I cannot say whether any call has been made by the owners since 1875. Though from that year she has sunk £1,000. I do not know if Steele kept a separate bank account for the 'Agnes M. Gordon'. I know nothing particular about my brother's transfer except that he wanted it. He stated no reason to me. At the time of my sequestration my brother was under no obligation to retransfer the shares to me. There was no written contract for the 'Flower of Banff'. The ropes and sails were furnished by Henry Munro. My son **Alexander** was managing owner of that vessel. I do not know who paid for the anchors and chains, unless it had been the owners. I was paid £1,100 in cash by two instalments for the 'Flower of Banff'. I did receive £300 from my son Alexander stated in my cash book, and the other £300 had been the proportion payable by other owners. My son **Alexander**, who is unmarried, has been foreman ship-carpenter to me for the last 20 years, at the rate of 22s a-week. My said son just got an interest in shipping by the late Mr Calder, Forres, putting a share in his name, on the understanding that when the ship paid herself the share would be my son's, he keeping his share insured. I think the next ship **Alexander** had a share of was the 'Fairwind', of which he had eight shares. He paid me for these shares in cash. I don't know where my son **Alexander** got the money to pay his share of the 'Flower of Banff', and I don't care. I never had any bill tops with the heading "John Watson & Son" in my possession. My son Alexander was never in partnership with me. He was not engaged in any other business to my knowledge. I never gave him any money in addition to his wages, not even a five-pound note at the New Year. Interrogated and asked to explain the entry in his cash book, under heading 21st July 1871, of the payment of a bill for £300 - depones – That is the proceeds of an accommodation bill which my son **Alexander** granted to me, and which was discounted, I think, at the Town and County Bank, Banff. I point out an entry of that bill on the 26th November. I distinctly say that none of these accommodation bills were in payment of my son **Alexander's** share of the 'Flower of Banff'. Masson was not married to my daughter in 1871. He paid me his share (£150) of the 'Flower of Banff' in my office on 11th June, 1871. I gave him no receipt. I do not know where he got the money, and I did not give him it. I do not know that there was any difficulty about Masson's providing that money. Steele's share was paid to me in cash, but whether through himself or **Alexander Watson** I cannot say. The vessel was lost in the beginning of 1878. She was insured, but to what extent I cannot tell. My son **Alexander** got the insurance. I got the £120 at different times and in various sums on security of my shares of the 'Flower of Banff' before the date of the transfer to my brother James. The examination was shortly afterwards adjourned."*

1879, 29th April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "**BANFF BANKRUPTCY COURT. EXAMINATION OF JOHN WATSON.** Yesterday the examination in bankruptcy of John

Watson, shipbuilder, Banff, was resumed before Sheriff-substitute G. Watson, in the Banff Sheriff Court there were present Mr A. Duncan, bank agent Banff, trustee; Mr James Morrison, solicitor, agent for the trustee; Mr A. Watt, solicitor, for Messrs McConnachie & Ironside, Banff (creditors); and Mr Geo. Hossack solicitor, Banff, agent for the bankrupt. Interrogated by Mr Morrison - Did you ever make a calculation of the cost of the material and workmanship of any one ship built by you, so as to ascertain the profit or loss thereupon? Deponed - No, not on any particular ship. I never did so at all. Neither before or after they were built? — No. - I have received no dividends for the ship '**John Watson**'. I think she had paid dividends to strangers since 1875. What she paid was put to paying the bill upon her. I cannot say how much there was. By strangers I mean those that held shares paid -up outside the family — only they received dividends. The ship was paid before, only the bill remaining. Not a far thing of the ship belonged to me till it was all clear and what I said before about owning a portion of it was not correct. Watt pointed out that in his previous examination the bankrupt had declared that held an eighth of the vessel '**John Watson**'. Mr Hossack said that the statement was made by the bankrupt without his having an opportunity to make any qualification. 'The Bankrupt - My sons were not here the time the ship was built. They were all from home, and when the register was required to be made up they thought would be better for me to put my name in and grant them bills of sale, which they could return, and get their names entered. They have all done that with the exception of my son John. My name, therefore, stands for an eighth. The other four shares of the number standing in my name belong to my son John, who resides at Leith. I executed a transfer of these four shares to my son John. It was about the time that the transfer were executed in favour of my sons James and David. I believe that the transfer was transmitted by post to John at the time. I now wish to correct my state of affairs, to the effect that only four shares of the '**John Watson**' belong to me, in place of eight stated in my state of affairs. I suppose the last dividend on the vessel was declared about two months ago. I could not tell how much divided. I suppose £900 is not far from it. I never signed receipts for dividends. A few days sequestration I got £60 from H. Munro, ropemaker in payment of an account I entered it in my book under date 26th February. I point out in book £13 as having been paid by me for accounts under that date. I paid wages that time for repairs on the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. I should say it would be about £40. At the time I was left with £9 or £10, and I paid £7 after I became bankrupt as the last weeks wages, so that I had £2 or £3 left. I gave up to my trustee to recover the account for repairing the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. At this stage the proceedings were, on the motion of Mr Morrison, adjourned till after the examination of members of the bankrupt's family, which takes place on 8th May next."

1879, 6th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser published the following advertisement: "**TO SHIPBUILDERS.** To be Let, with Entry at Whitsunday first, THE SHIPBUILDING YARD, SAWPIT, and PREMISES at BANFF HARBOUR, lately occupied by **John Watson**, Shipbuilder. Banff, with use of Patent Slip for Repairing Vessels. The Premises are

Commodious, and conveniently situated for carrying on a large Trade. For particulars, apply to ALEXANDER DUNCAN, Bank Agent in Banff, Trustee on John Watson's Estate, or Wm. COUTTS & MORRISON, Solicitors, Banff, Agents in the Sequestration. Banff, 5th May 1879."

1879, 9th May: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "**BANFF BANKRUPTCY COURT. JOHN WATSON'S SEQUESTRATION.** In the Banff Bankruptcy Court yesterday — before Sheriff Scott Moncrieff — the examination into the sequestrated estate of **John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff, was continued. There were present Mr Duncan, banker, trustee; Mr Morrison, solicitor, agent for the trustee; Mr G. M. Hossack, agent for the bankrupt; and Mr George, solicitor, who appeared for Mr Steele and Mr James Watson. George Steele, baker, Banff, was the first witness, who deponed — I am son-in-law of the bankrupt. In 1866 the bankrupt built ship named the '**Fairwind**', which I originally held 16 shares, but I afterwards acquired eight from William Storm. I do not recollect the cost of said vessel. She cost under £1,200. I paid the 16 shares and the eight acquired shares both in cash. I don't know if the other owners paid **Mr Watson** for their shares. The said vessel was sold in March 1869. I think she was sold for £750. I received my share of the money, but I cannot tell if the bankrupt, who was the managing owner, paid the other owners. In 1869 the ship '**Forward**' was built on speculation, and to save the bankrupt loss the family agreed to take the ship at valuation. The bankrupt fixed the price. I owned half of that vessel, which I paid in cash. I cannot tell how the other owners paid their shares. I was managing owner after the vessel went to sea. The vessel was lost shortly after going to sea, and the loss in consequence was £200. The '**Agnes M. Gordon**' was built to replace the '**Forward**', at a less tonnage, to represent the loss. I was managing owner. I never got any receipts from the bankrupt of any payments made by me for shares of the vessels. The insurance got from the '**Forward**' was paid to account to the price of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**', and the balance of the price of that vessel was paid by me in cash. The insurance on the '**Forward**' was about £1,600. The bankrupt was paid for hull, spars, and blocks, £1,150. A bill was discounted for part of the price of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**', but the bankrupt had nothing to with the bill. He was not the drawer of it. The bankrupt held eight shares of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. The first time that knew of these eight shares being transferred was two years ago, when a new register was sent to London, where I was at the time. I found that the shares had been transferred to James Watson, Whitehills. I did not know then that he was a brother of the bankrupt. I did not speak to the bankrupt on return about transferring the shares. During the first three years the dividends of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**' went to clear the vessel, and in the fourth or fifth year there was a small dividend. My books will show who the dividend was paid to. No one else but the bankrupt got the dividends on his shares. It is as possible as not that the bankrupt did sign the ship's books for the dividends. I cannot speak definitely without the books. He did not tell when he got the dividends whether he was drawing them for himself or his brother. I have paid for all the shipping got from the bankrupt, and am not due him anything. Mr Morrison

said this closed his examination of this witness, and said that he did not intend to examine him in reference to the ship '**John Watson**', because he was satisfied from the bankrupt's books and witness's own books that he had paid for all the shares which he possessed of that vessel. Mr George asked if the trustee would admit that the bankrupt's books showed that Mr Steele had paid for his shares of all the other ships spoken to during the examination. Mr Morrison said he was not competent to understand the bankrupt's books. Mr George said it was only fair to Mr Steele, as statements had been made during the bankrupt's examination to the effect that "the tree was dead and the branches in & flourishing condition," that the trustee 'could satisfy himself on this point. If he examined the bankrupt's books, he would find what he had stated to be true, because the cash book before him contained entries of all the money paid by Steele, and from that book and from the bank book it was all traceable of having been lodged at the trustee's own agency of the Town and County Bank. **Alexander Watson**, son of the bankrupt, deponed - I am 40 years of age, and reside in Banff. I have been 22 years foreman to my father. I was never in company with him, or had any shares in the profits of the business. I never saw any invoices with the heading, "**John Watson & Son**." I was managing owner of the '**Flower of Banff**', which was built in 1871, and lost in February 1878. As far as I recollect the vessel was a good way advanced in the building before she was bought by the owners. The vessel cost £1,340 for hull and spars and part of the iron work. She was paid in cash to the builder. There was a bill for part of the price. My father was part owner. He ceased to an owner when the ship was lost. The vessel paid a good few dividends, which were paid to the owners so far as they were not on the bill. After his share was clear my father got dividends. The vessel, so far as I recollect, cleared herself between three and four years. The vessel was insured for about £1,300. The insurance was paid about three months after the vessel was lost, and I paid my father his share of the insurance. I never heard that my uncle James Watson was an owner until the vessel was lost and the insurance paid. I held eight original shares of the '**John Watson**', which I paid to the managing owner George Steele. I sold four to George Ritchie. In 1876 the '**Fairwind**' was built, and I am still the managing owner. She cost £1,808 for hull, spars, and blocks. The statement by my father that the '**Fairwind**' cost £1,368 is wrong. He detailed the correct sums, but took the wrong ships. The £1,368 should apply to the '**Flower of Banff**', and the other sum to the '**Fairwind**'. I have paid for all the shares of shipping I possess to my father. I am not due him anything. I never got any receipts for payments paid to my father except the builder's certificate for the ship. I never in any way took the management of my father's money matters. I had nothing do with his books. I may have discharged small receipts in his name. I never knew how he stood financially. My father was correct in stating I had 22s week, but I got my board in addition to that. I am unmarried. I was also paid £10 a-year for managing each ship. James Watson, Whitehills, brother of the bankrupt, was then examined. He said - I am 84 years of age. On the 28th February 1872, I obtained a transfer of eight shares of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**' from

brother. I paid the consideration money for these shares in three instalments. I paid the first instalment in 1870 or 1871 for the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. It was more than £50. I was not needing to invest in shipping at that time, but I thought it would be a good speculation. It was paid in cash direct to my brother. I had not the cash beside me at Whitehills. I did not pay him by cheque. I had money deposited in the National and North Scotland Banks in Banff; and I lifted these receipts and paid my brother with them. The second instalment was paid by me before 14 or 15 months after uplifting money which I had deposited in the said banks in Banff. The third was paid in the same way a few months afterwards. In all, I paid £150 on the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. I paid the whole of the instalments before I got the bill of sale. My brother asked me to buy the shares He did not apply to me for a loan. I never lent him a sixpence. The bankrupt did not speak of a loan to me. He did speak of security, and the bill of sale is the security. I explain that the sum stated in the bill of sale is the correct sum which I paid, and not that stated by my brother. I got no vouchers from brother for the money until I got the bill of sale. It was a security transaction at first, and afterwards became an out-and-out sale. I got the bill of sale on the date which it bears, and have had it ever since. I was in Banff on the 20th March 1877, in order to get the bill of sale registered. My brother went to the Custom-House with me, and we had the bill registered. Previous to the 20th of March 1877, my brother never promised to pay me the sum. My brother never told me that he was getting into difficulties, and I did not know. When I got the bill of sale I was not aware that I required to get it registered, but I afterwards found it was necessary. My brother fixed the price of the shares. The bill of sale for the '**Flower of Banff**' was signed on the same day as the one for the '**Agnes M Gordon**'. I paid for the shares of the '**Flower of Banff**' in precisely the same way I paid for the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. The sums may have been different, but the money was drawn from the same banks. The sale was an out-and-out one, but I had no necessity for investing in shipping. My brother applied to me to buy the shares. I took the shares on my brother word, and never inquired whether the bargain was a fair one or not. I never asked interest for the money. It would not be true if my brother had said that it was a loan to 20th March 1877, and that afterwards it was a sale. I never got any dividends from the '**Agnes M. Gordon**', and she has never paid, I never attended the meetings of the owners. I never asked Mr Steele, the managing owner, for my share of the dividends, and never received notice of the meetings of the owners. My brother never told me that he was attending the meetings and drawing the dividends. **Alexander Watson**, who was managing owner of the '**Flower of Banff**', never gave me any notice to attend the meetings of the owners of that vessel. I never received any dividend from the '**Flower of Banff**'. I am not aware what the dividends were between 1872 and 1878 of the '**Flower of Banff**'. I never made inquiry. My shares were insured along with the rest. When the vessel was lost, I got the part of the insurance which was due to me. It was between £50 and £100, but I do not remember the correct amount. It was paid to me through my brother. The said shares were not given to me in gift, and I am not due my brother

anything in respect thereof or of anything else. The consideration money for the shares is correctly stated in the bill of sale. Mr Hossack then said that George Watson, another of the bankrupt's sons, who had been cited as a witness, had left for the west fishing. Mr Morrison then moved for an adjournment on the ground that the trustee was not satisfied as to where all the bankrupt's money had gone to. The trustee was entitled to an explanation, but the explanation which had been given was so vague that it could not be accepted by any person who knew anything about the matter. The bankrupt had lost since 1870 upwards of £3,000, although, at the same time, the trustee believed that further claims will yet be handed in which will make his loss much larger. The trustee was willing to give the bankrupt and his agent every opportunity and assistance to go over his books so as furnish a detailed statement of his losses, but if he was unable do so the trustee would take a course, although it was a very disagreeable one, in terms of the 90th section of the Bankruptcy Act. Mr Hossack said it would be impossible for him to ascertain how these losses arose when the trustee was unable to do so. The Sheriff — He offers you his assistance. Mr Hossack then said he had no objection to the adjournment, and after some further conversation the examination was continued till the 15th inst."



*A 3-masted schooner and small fishing boats in Banff Harbour c1900.
(Photographer unknown).*

**Important Sale of Household Furniture,
Shipbuilder's Plant, Tools, Timber, &c.**

By instructions from the Trustee on the Sequestered Estate of John Watson, Shipbuilder in Banff, the Subscriber will Sell, by Public Roup, at the Shipbuilding Yard, Banff Harbour, on WEDNESDAY the 21st day of May current, at Half-past Ten o'clock Forenoon,

1. **T**HE Whole TOOLS, WORKING PLANT, and IMPLEMENTS (except Steam Engine, Boiler, and Sawing Bench, &c.), in the Shipbuilding Yard at Banff Harbour, belonging to the Bankrupt Estate, together with the Timber, Planking, and other Materials therein, in lots to suit purchasers.

ALSO,

On same day, at Half-past One o'clock Afternoon, within the Fife Arms Hotel, Banff,

2. TWO POLICIES of INSURANCE on the Life of the Bankrupt (who is aged 71), effected with the Life Association of Scotland, p. £200 each, with right to participation in the Profits of the Company; and 8-64th SHARES of the Three-masted Schooner 'JOHN WATSON,' OF BANFF. The Vessel is presently in the Australian Trade, was Built in 1875 of French Oak and Pitch Pine, Classed A1 at Lloyds for Ten Years, and 220 Tons Gross Measurement.

ALSO,

Same day, at Three o'clock P.M., at No. 12, Castle Street, Banff,

3. The HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, belonging to the Estate, consisting of—Mahogany Table, Mahogany Couch in Haireloth, 7 Mahogany Chairs, Sideboard, Wall Mirror in Gilt Frame, Sofa in American Cloth, Eight-day Clock, Barometer, 5 Mahogany Chairs in Haireloth, Carpets and Hearth Rugs, Fenders and Fire-Irons, Feather Beds, Blankets, Bolsters, and Pillows, Bedroom Furniture, and Kitchen Utensils, together with Pictures, Ornaments, and a variety of other Effects.

JOHN ROBSON, Auctioneer.

Banff, 5th May 1879.

Auction advertisement in the Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 13th May 1879.

1879, 13th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser published the above advertisement regarding sale of shipbuilding plant and tools, timber, insurance policies, shares in a schooner and household furniture from the sequestered estate of **John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff:

1879, 16th May: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: '**BANFF BANKRUPTCY COURT. THE SEQUESTRATION OF JOHN WATSON, SHIPBUILDER.** – The examination into the sequestered estate of **John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff, was continued yesterday in the Banff Bankruptcy Court before Sheriff Scott Moncrieff. Mr Morrison, solicitor, an agent for the

trustee, stated that the bankrupt was in the course of making up a state of his affairs, but that he had been unable to complete it so as to produce it at this diet. Mr G. M. Hossack, solicitor, asked on behalf of the bankrupt that a prorogation of the diet of examination be granted in order to allow the bankrupt to complete his state of affairs. Mr Morrison for the trustee, thought that the adjournment should be granted, and the Sheriff accordingly continued the diet for a week."

1879, 22nd May: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "**BANFF. PROPERTY SALE.** – Yesterday the dwelling-house in South Castle Street belonging to **John Watson, shipbuilder**, was exposed for sale, in the Fife Arms Hotel, by Mr Alexander George, solicitor, Macduff, on behalf of the bondholder, and after competition it was purchased by Mr Chalmers, painter, for £452. Four shares of the ship '**John Watson**', of 220 tons gross measurement, presently in Australia, were also exposed for sale by Mr Morrison, solicitor, Banff, at the upset price of £175, but they failed to find a purchaser, and the sale was adjourned. Two policies for life assurance for £200 each on the life of **John Watson, shipbuilder**, with right of participation in the profits of the company, were offered at the same time, but were not sold. Mr Robertson, auctioneer, Banff, was judge of roup."

1879, 27th May: The Banffshire Journal reported as follows: "**BANKRUPTCY OF JOHN WATSON, BANFF.** An adjourned examination in the bankruptcy of John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff, was held in the Court-House, Banff, on Thursday. Sheriff Scott Moncrieff presided. There were present – Mr Alex. Duncan, banker trustee; Mr James Morrison, solicitor, agent for the trustee; Mr Garden M. Hossack, agent for the bankrupt. Mr Hossack said his lordship would recollect that at last diet Mr Morrison wished the bankrupt to take opportunity to make up a statement showing how his losses arose. He acceded to that request; and since then **Mr Watson**, with the assistance of a professional accountant, went over his cash book and ledger, and a statement had been made up showing his assets from the year 1872 to the present year 1879; and also the outlays in the shape of wages and material during the like period. From the account was made up an abstract that had been handed to Mr Morrison; and, curiously enough, the abstract showed that the deficit during that period amounted to £3,129. (Equivalent to approx. £300,000 in 2022). That was made up from material, about the correctness of which Mr Morrison might satisfy himself by referring to the extended notes taken by the accountant. Mr Morrison said he received on the previous afternoon the statement which he submitted to the trustee. They had gone over the statement together, and were unable to understand from it the particulars of any loss that had been made. The purpose of the adjournment was to allow bankrupt to make up a statement showing how he had lost so much money; but the document made up was simply an abstract. To give an idea of its value, he would take the first item in it, which referred to the year 1872, and simply said – 'Received for vessels built and repaired, £3,793 5s; and on the debtor side – Paid wages and

*materials etc., To give an idea of its value, he would take the first item in it, which referred to the year 1872, and simply said – “Received for vessels built and repaired, £3,793 5s; and on the debtor side – Paid wages and materials etc., £4,302 13s 2d.’ There was thus an excess of expenditure in that year; and the first question he had to put under it was, where did the loss occur, on what particular vessels, and was it for timber or wages, or in any other way, for there was nothing in the statement to show? £4,302 13s 2d.” There was thus an excess of expenditure in that year; and the first question he had to put under it was, where did the loss occur, on what particular vessels, and was it for timber or wages, or in any other way, for there was nothing in the statement to show? The Sheriff asked if there were not details? Mr Morrison said there were not. It was simply an abstract, bringing out very nearly what he already brought out on the first day of the examination – namely that the bankrupt had made a deficit of over £3,000 in seven years. He knew that before, and what he wished to be definitely informed about was how the losses occurred. It would not do to tell them that all the money had been lost; the bankrupt was bound to answer as to how it had been lost; and really the statement given in amounted to nothing at all. Mr Hossack said that the bankrupt had given information as to how his losses arose, by showing that it was upon ships for material, and in other ways. If the trustee could point to any specific charge that the bankrupt had kept back any item, there would be good cause to take action for having him put into prison, but unless they could make out that they must accept the statement as they stood upon his books. Mr Morrison said he must just pursue a policy of questioning. The bankrupt was then put on oath. By Mr Morrison – Can you explain how the sum of £518 of loss was made in the year 1872 is made up? Depones – It is just a downright loss upon timber and wages. Bankrupt further deponed – About one-half of the loss was upon timber and the other half upon wages. I do not remember what ships I built in 1872. I do not know that I could recollect by looking my books, as I do not remember if they are specially mentioned. The ‘**Bella**’ of Wick was one, and the ‘**Sovereign**’ of Banff was another, and the ‘**Cairnrankie**’ of Macduff another. I made a loss upon every one of these vessels. I cannot exactly tell you how much I lost upon the ‘**Bella**’ of Wick, owing to the way that our business was conducted. I should say I lost above £100 upon each of the three ships; that is upon the wood work. I built those three vessels to contract. When I contracted for the ‘**Bella**’ I took into account the price of timber, and I did the same for the other two ships. I explain that the price of timber rose subsequent to my making the contracts, and the note of the loss I was not aware at the time that I made the loss. I never found out that I made a loss upon these three ships till I was overhauling my books the other day. Mr Morrison then asked if the whole statement of losses was merely guess work, which the bankrupt repudiated. It was pointed out that on the credit side of the statement given in by the bankrupt there was a total of £37,251 0s. 5d., and on the debtor side £39, 131 17s. 9½d., and he was asked to give particulars as to how the deficiency was caused. Bankrupt said he was willing to give every particular, and it would be found in*

the books and in the details of the statement made up for him, which were in the hands of the accountant. Mr Morrison then moved the Court to adjourn till he had time to examine the details of the statement. The Sheriff granted and adjournment till Monday, the bankrupt agreeing to get the particulars of the statement placed in Mr Morrison's hands.

*Yesterday the examination of **John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff, was resumed before Sheriff Scott Moncrieff, within the Court-House, Banff. There were present – Mr Alexander Duncan, bank agent, Banff, the trustee; Mr James Morrison, solicitor, Banff, agent for trustee; and Mr Garden M. Hossack, solicitor, Banff, agent for bankrupt. Mr Hossack said the abstract was a simple statement of cash receipts and cash outlays, but it did not point to one single item of loss. They saw there the deficiency of money, but it did not show how that deficiency had arisen. They wanted to know how the deficiency had arisen. He went on to refer to a bankruptcy examination at Peterhead on Friday, where the bankrupt had produced a statement of his losses. Mr Hossack objected to the reference to a newspaper notice of the proceedings alluded to. If Mr Morrison would bring forward an authoritative statement he would have no objections to its production, but he thought it was very unfair to introduce an unofficial report of the case. The Sheriff allowed Mr Morrison to refer to the case. Mr Morrison, after quoting from the case at Peterhead, said they had never had any such statement of losses there. The Sheriff – Except the aggregate losses. Mr Coutts specified a number of pencil marks in the bankrupt's cash book, under different years, which were not there when the book was first produced, and which were not included in the summation. The difficulty was where these came from, when they found the accountant dealing, not with the entries in the book, but with other matters that they knew nothing about. The bankrupt seemed to have supplemented the statements in an extraordinary way. He submitted that it was necessary to get some explanation from the accountant who made up these notes as to how he obtained the additional information. He should also like to know when these pencil marks were made. Mr Hossack said that, as he stated when the abstract was produced last court day, it was made up, not only from the cash book and ledgers, but also from the bank book. The cash book did not contain all the assets of **Mr Watson**, and he had explained himself, in his examination in chief, that it did not do so. This statement was made up not only from the ledger and cash book, but also from the bank book, and that was the explanation of the sums appearing in the abstract that did not appear in the cash book or ledger. The accountant would be very willing to afford any explanation that was desired as to the making up of the abstract. Had the bankrupt been a man of education, or had he kept a regular set of books, and been in a position to put his finger on the different transactions from one year to another, he could have understood the objection that had been raised, but seeing they were dealing with an ignorant man, who was a mere fisherman twenty-five years ago, it was not inexplicable how he was unable to give the details. Mr Morrison said that he had been going into the abstract to see if he could ascertain where the bankrupt had made any loss when it*

was undertaken to furnish the trustee with the details which would inform him. The trustee was not any wiser by having the details. The bankrupt had indeed deponed that he never made over £30 of bad debts in his life, this statement, he reported, did not show his losses. It showed that he had received a certain amount of money, and that the deficiency was so much, but what they wanted to know was how the deficiency had arisen. Mr Hossack said it would be recollected that one of the theories broached by Mr Morrison or the agent for some of the creditors was that Mr Watson had given his means to his sons and sons-in-law. Mr Morrison had done his best to ascertain if that was the fact, and instead of proving that he gave money to sons and sons-in-law, he had made it clear that they had paid for their shares, and he had admitted that to the court. Mr Morrison said he never did any such thing. He had admitted to Mr Steele that he had paid the full share of the **'John Watson'**. Bankrupt was then examined by Mr Morrison. Interrogated – In the year 1873, according to this statement, you made a loss of £205 10s. Tell us what particular vessels you made that loss: Depones – I cannot tell you, and I told you that before. I just lost it on wood, work, and iron. Can you give us any other particulars? - No. What ships did you build in 1873: - I do not remember. But you have the book here. Tell us what ships you built in 1873? I built the **'Norseman'**, the **'Alice'**, and the **'Fleetwing'**. What was your loss on the **'Norseman'**? - I cannot tell. What was the contract price of the **'Norseman'**? – I cannot tell you just now. You have your book here: cannot you tell us from it? – No; I cannot tell you from this book. What other books have you? I have no other books, but my letters, etc., which are given up to the trustee, will show. The Sheriff – Have you anything from which you will be able to answer the question. Bankrupt – I cannot answer the question in any other way. The Sheriff – You have been asked a simple question, which you may or may not be able to answer – What was the contract price of the vessel? Bankrupt examines his ledger, and deponed – I was paid for her £1,084. Mr Coutts said he thought it only right to show the inconsistency, because he found from the accountant's notes entries as follows: Under date January £300; February, £300; April, £300; May, £400 and June, £60 and £24 10s., making in all, £1,384. Mr Morrison – What was the correct sum? Was it £1,300 or £1,000? Bankrupt deponed – I now explain that I was paid £1384 for the **'Norseman'**; not £1,000? The £300 was not entered in my cash book, but it was entered in my bank book. – How much did the timber of this vessel cost you? I cannot tell; my loss comes out at the year's end. – Can you tell us what the iron cost: I cannot, but it appears in the accounts handed to my trustee. – Can you tell us what you paid for wages? No, I cannot tell you off-hand. – What was the contract price of the **'Alice'**? I received for the **'Alice'** the sum of £1,217. – What did the **'Alice'** cost you for timber? I cannot tell. – Can you tell me much for iron or wages? I cannot; but the accounts in the trustees' possession would show. – Do you mean to say they would specify the items? – No, but the wages book will show you the wages. I am asking about the iron? Messrs McConachie & Ironside's accounts would show that. What would show the timber? – The wood is all in my own account from beginning to

end each year, and unless you take that I can give you it in another way. The other ship you built in 1873 was the '**Fleetwing**'; can you give us any further particulars about her than you have given about the other ships? – No. I find from the statement made up for you by the accountant that you only lost 3d. in 1874 during the whole year: will you tell us what ships you built in 1874? – I built in 1874, part of the '**Fleetwing**', the '**Andrew Longmore**', and part of the '**Olivia**'. In the year 1875, according to these notes, I find you received £37 4s. 2d. more cash than you paid away. What ships did you build in that year? – Part of the '**Olivia**', the '**John Watson**', and the '**Mary**'. You cannot tell us now much any ship cost; would you tell us how you came to make up the price of the '**John Watson**' in your book, - I made the entry as to the price of the '**John Watson**' from notes before I became bankrupt. I made said entry from the notes given, and information supplied by me to my trustee. According to the statements I produce, I made in 1876 a loss of £203 10s. In 1876, I built the '**Lily**', the '**Victoria**', and the '**Fairwind**'. I cannot tell upon which of these vessels I sustained the loss of £205. My books do not show upon which of them the loss was made. In 1877 I made a loss of £662 14s 4½d.; and in that year I built part of the '**Fairwind**', the '**Elizabeth**', and part of the '**Helen West**'. I made no profit upon any of those ships. At the time I believed I was making a profit upon them. I cannot specify any one of the ships that I made a particular loss upon. In the year 1878 I made a loss of £876 16s.; and in that year I built part of the '**Helen West**', the '**Glenboyn**', and the '**Lady of the Lake**'. I lost very heavily upon the '**Glenboyn**'; conscientiously, I believe I lost £500 upon that ship. The contract price of that vessel was £10 2s. 6d. per ton; and she was 216 tons. I got for the '**Glenboyn**' £2,271 11s. for hull and spars. I had nothing to do with chains and anchors. I cannot tell what the wood work of that vessel cost. I cannot say how much the iron work of that vessel cost. I never go the account from Mr McConnachie. I cannot tell how much I paid in wages. I calculate the amount that I lost on that vessel by slump. I cannot say what I lost upon the '**Helen West**', nor what I lost on the '**Lady of the Lake**'. When I contracted for the three vessels I did not make up an account of what the material and wages would cost me. I explain that I took the contract for the '**Glenboyn**' at a slump sum per ton, without calculating what she would cost me; and the price was £10 10s per ton, and I think the tonnage was 216 tons. I cannot tell the contract price of the '**Helen West**', but she was 99 tons. I got £1,280 for her. When I know that the price was nearly £13 per ton, I believe that I had a loss upon her. The '**Lady of the Lake**' was from 80 to 86 tons, and I built her at 311 per ton. I always contracted to build vessels by the ton. I contracted in a similar way for the ships that I built for my sons and sons-in-law. Mr Morrison asked the attention of the Sheriff to the 93rd section of the Bankruptcy Act, which said that the explanations of the bankrupt must be to the satisfaction of the Court. If the examination was satisfactory to the Court, he had nothing further to say. Sheriff Scott Moncrieff said that the statute required that the bankrupt should furnish material for showing the state of his affairs. That had been done. He asked if the trustee had any motion to make? Mr Morrison said the

*trustee and himself had endeavoured to expiscate the affairs of the bankrupt. They were both of the same opinion, that there was something they could not comprehend as to how these losses had been made; and they could get no further answers. Keeping in view what had been brought out, if the Court thought it satisfactory, he had nothing further to say. The 93rd section of the Act said the answers must be satisfactory to the Court. They could not understand the answers. Mr Hossack said that **Mr Watson** had given the explanations as far as lay in his power. The books had not been kept upon any system, but were merely jottings to assist the memory in making out accounts. Had the books been kept upon a right principle he could quite easily have seen how he should have stated the way in which the losses arose; but, seeing that the man had all along been working in the dark, and from hand to mouth, he had given us satisfactory explanation as possible. If Mr Morrison would put his finger upon one single item pointing to a fraud he would be glad to have it done. But Mr Morrison had utterly and signally failed in the line of action he took, which was to show the **Mr Watson** had disposed of his means among his family. He maintained that the bankrupt had given as satisfactory an explanation as could be looked for of how the losses were made. In answer to Mr Morrison, the bankrupt then declared that he had never made a donation of any property to anyone, and never destroyed any books or papers relative to his affairs. He had not granted any bills or cautionary obligations. Sheriff Scott Moncrieff delayed administering the oath till he had time to consider the bankrupt's depositions."*

1879, 3rd June: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "**THE SEQUESTRATION OF JOHN WATSON, SHIP-BUILDERS – ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH.** – At the Banff Bankruptcy Court yesterday – before Sheriff Scott Moncrieff – the sequestration of **John Watson, shipbuilder** in Banff, again came before the Court. There were present Mr Alexander Duncan, trustee on the estate; Mr Morrison, agent for the trustee; and Mr Hossack, agent for the bankrupt. Mr Morrison intimated that he had no more questions to ask the bankrupt. The Sheriff than said – I have considered this subject, and though the trustee did not succeed in making things clear, at the same time I cannot see my way to refuse to administer the statutory oath. This was not a case in which the bankrupt has declined positively to answer any questions, and he seems to have supplied the trustee with a detailed abstract of his affairs and all the materials asked for. The trustee had brought up and examined various members of the bankrupt's family with reference to what appeared to be the most suspicious circumstances in the case, but their evidence went to support the bankrupt in what he had said. Of course, though the statutory oath was administered, it does not prevent his being re-examined if the trustee thinks fit. The statutory oath was then administered."

1879, 16th July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "**RECLAIMING NOTE. – WATSON V. DUNCAN.** In this action, John Watson jun., residing at Leek, Staffordshire, sues Alexander Duncan, agent for the Aberdeen Town and County Bank, Banff, trustee in the

*sequestrated estate of **John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff**, to have him ordained to grant such deed as would be necessary to have the petitioner registered as the owner of four shares of a vessel built by the said **John Watson** at Banff in 1875. The petitioner's name was not registered as owner of the shares in question, but he drew the profits offering to them, he having purchased them in July 1875. The respondent denied the averments of the petitioner, and submitted that he had no right to the shares in question, and that the respondent, being the registered owner of the shares in place of the bankrupt, who was registered owner, was entitled to sell and dispose of them behoof of the bankrupt and creditors. The Lord Ordinary (Adam) refused the prayer of the petition with expenses. The petitioner reclaimed, and counsel were heard on Saturday and today, when the case was taken to avizandum. Counsel for the petitioner – Mr Dickson. Agent – Geo. Anderson, S.S.C. Counsel for the respondent – Mr Pearson. Agent – Alexander Morrison, S.S.C.”* The judgement was made on the 21st July as reported in the Aberdeen Press and Journal below.

(Avizandum - Takes time to consider his judgement).

1879, 21st July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: “RECLAIMING NOTE. WATSON v. DUNCAN. *This was an action at the instance of John Watson jun., clerk in Staffordshire against Alexander Duncan, agent for the Town and County Bank, Banff, seeking to have the respondent ordained to execute such a deed as was necessary to have the petitioner registered as the owner of four shares of a ship called the ‘John Watson’. Counsel in the action were heard lately, and today the Lord President giving judgement, said that in this case the petitioner, John Watson jun., claimed to have four shares of a certain ship struck out of the sequestration of his father on the ground that they belonged to the petitioner as private property. The ship was built in 1875 by **John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff**, who called it after his own name. The builder retained eight shares, which were registered in his own name; but about the same time, on the 11th July 1875, he transferred four of these eight shares to his son John Watson, as it was alleged, for the price paid. This was done by bill of sale in proper form, but the petitioner was not registered as the owner of his shares. The trustee in the sequestration of **John Watson, senior**, therefore contended that in respect of the state of the register he is entitled to the whole eight shares for the benefit of sequestration. It was not said on the part of the trustees that this was in my decree a collusive transaction on the part of the father and his son. Therefore it must be taken as matter of fact that the sale was made and the price paid. To this must be added that from the time that this bill of sale was delivered to the petitioner he received from time to time from a person of the name of George Steele his proportional share of the earnings of the vessel. Therefore the petitioner was in the position of having a good bill of sale under the Registry Acts and Merchant Shipping Act, and he had also from the time of acquiring that right been in possession of the shares, because the only possession that the part-owner of the vessel could have was his share of the earnings of the*

vessel. On these and other grounds, which were quoted at considerable length by his lordship and Lord Deas, the Court declared that the four shares belonged to the petitioner and were not vested in the trustee of the sequestration, and therefore granted the prayer of the petition. No expenses were given on either side. Counsel for the petitioner and reclaimer – Mr Dickson. Agent – Geo Andrew, S.S.C. Counsel for the respondent – Mr Pearson. Agent – Alex. Morrison, S.S.C. Local agents – For the applicant Mr Garden M. Hossack, solicitor, Banff; for the respondent Mr Wm. Coutts, solicitor, Banff.”

1879, 9th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser published the following advertisement regarding the letting of John Watson’s former shipyard and the 200-ton capacity patent slip at Banff Harbour.

SHIP-BUILDING YARD AND PATENT SLIP AT BANFF TO BE LET.

THE SHIP-BUILDING YARD and SLIP at the HARBOUR of BANFF are to be Let, for such period as may be agreed on, from and after 22ND NOVEMBER next.

Besides the Accommodation necessary for the Slip, the Yard contains sufficient Space for building a New Vessel of considerable Tonnage, and New Vessels may be built on the Cradle, if the Tenant be inclined. There is also a Sawpit, with Loft above, and the Yard is enclosed with Stone Walls. The Slip has recently undergone substantial repair, and is capable of taking up Vessels of 200 Tons O.M.

It is probable that an Incoming Tenant may be able to arrange with the Trustee on the Estate of Mr **John Watson**, the present Tenant, for Immediate Entry.

Sealed Offers to be lodged with **JAMES SMITH**, Town-House, **Banff**, before 15TH SEPTEMBER next, at Noon; and the Conditions of Let may be learned on application to Mr **SMITH**.

Banff, 20th August 1879.

Advertisement in the Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser 9th September 1879.

1879, 11th November: The partnership between John Geddie and his brother William Geddie in business as J & W Geddie, Shipbuilders, Duffushillock, Banff (established in 1865) was dissolved and William Geddie on his own shortly after acquired the lease of Morton’s Patent Slip and the shipyard at Banff Harbour.

1881, 15th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported that in front of sheriff Scott Moncrieff, **John Watson** received his discharge in bankruptcy, and the statutory oath was administered to him.

1902, 1st October: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported that John Watson Jnr., fourth son of **John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff was in Banff on holiday. John Watson Jnr. was secretary of the Harbour Board of Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

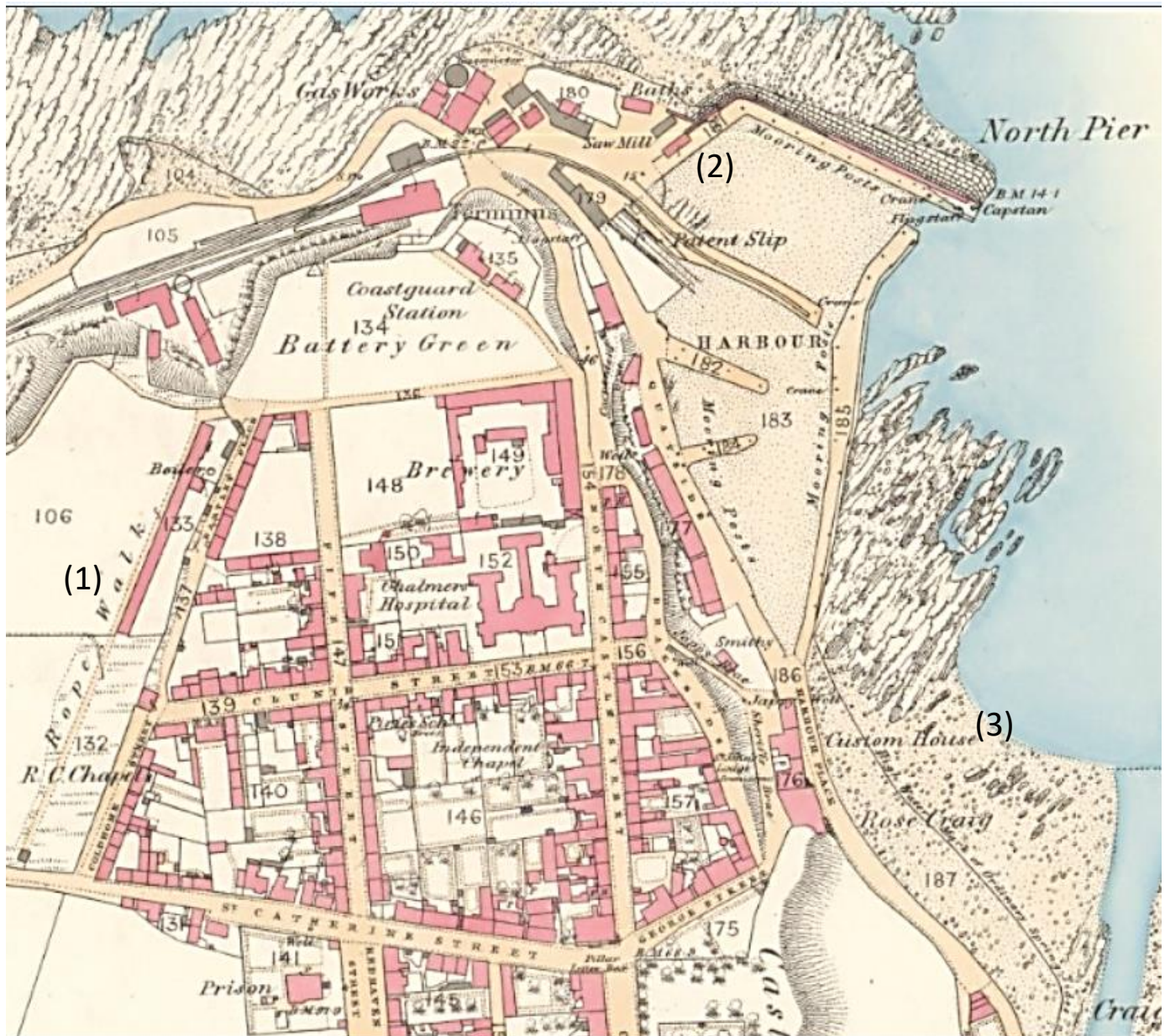
1906, 15th May: The Banffshire Journal in an article reported that: “*The ‘Boyndie’ was a small smack, built at Blackpots; her first skipper was Captain Wiseman.*” This is possibly another vessel built by **John Watson** before he moved to Banff Harbour.



Blackpots Harbour. (S. Bruce).

Ropes and Sails.

John Watson would have bought ropes and sails from the Banff Ropeworks (1) which was owned by Henry Munro (later provost of Banff), and on the map below you can see the ropery location on the west end of the town.



Map of Banff, 1866.

Also visible on this map is the Saw Mill (2) located at the north side of the harbour, very conveniently sited aside the Patent Slip, and (3) the Custom House where vessels were registered.

The railway line can be seen to go all the way down the jetty at the harbour adjacent to the Patent Slip.

A Banff Schooner.

I'm sitting at Banff Harbour,
Looking out at Banff Bay,
Looking at the bonnie yachts sailing,
I could sit here all day.

But it wasn't always like this.

There was once a thriving shipyard here,
Where many bonnie schooners were built,
The 'Seven Seas' many did steer,
Packed with cargoes to the hilt.

But, can you imagine the workmen,
Merrily working away,
Hammers and axes swinging,
With a new keel to lay.

For the superstitious men of the sea,
For luck, a penny placed under her keel,
Built from many an old oak tree,
A job that sometimes felt surreal.

It's very hard to imagine now,
A shipyard and a timber yard stacked high,
Schooners built with a clipper bow,
And a surveyor at hand, ready to classify.

Ship classification,
A1 at Lloyds, the best, they said,
High quality for this wonderful creation,
Fine lines and a beautiful figurehead.

She's sitting on the slip,
Like a giant sitting duck,
Christened with wine by a woman or a girl,
Another ritual performed for good luck.

Her launch is quite impressive,
Witnessed by many spectators,
Her owners now appear rather possessive,
Even more so than her creators.

The owners can't wait for the day,
To get her out to sea,
I imagine her out in Banff Bay,
All sails set, blowing wild and free.

Stanley Bruce, February 2021.

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Whitehills and Banff.

The following tables I have built up from scratch, as I have not seen a builder's list. I hope I have found all the vessels built, but without a builder's list it is possible that some may be missing. I found a total of 54 vessels, 55 if we include the '**Blossom**' built at Duffushillock in 1862. If you know of any others, please get in touch.

A press article states the '**Mayflower**' built in 1866 was the 24th vessel built, this fits with my research if we exclude the un-named schooner built at Blackpots in 1841.

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Whitehills.

John Watson established himself in Whitehills in 1830 as a boatbuilder. However, it was 1848 before I found a vessel which Watson definitely built. I'm inclined to think he initially worked building only small fishing boats, probably clinker-built, and doing ship-repair work. However, according to the Aberdeen Press and Journal published on 17th February 1841, on 6th February 1841 a schooner was launched at Blackpots Harbour. This vessel was possibly built by **John Watson**.




Date	Name	Rig	GRT	Owners	LRS	L x B x D
1841	Unknown	Schooner	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1848	The Friends	Schooner	44	Mr Peter Dow, Buckie.	Unknown	Unknown
1849	Hero	Schooner	54 NM 72 OM	Mr Bartlett, brewer, Banff.	Unknown	Unknown

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Banff.



John Watson moved to Banff from Whitehills in 1848, but the first two years in Banff the work carried out appears to be solely ship-repair work.

Date	Name	Rig	GRT	Owners	LRS	L x B x D
1850	Zephyr	Schooner	108 NM	J. Watson. (Speculatively).	8A1	71' x 21' 9" x unknown
1851	Victory	Smack	36 NM 61 OM	Eight Whitehills fishermen.	Unknown	Unknown
1854	Lady Gray	Brig	136 NM 207 OM	Various owners, Banff.	7A1	80.6' x 21.5' x 11.9'
1854	Matilda	Schooner	136 NM 91 OM	James Calder, Findhorn.	7A1	Unknown

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Banff. (Continued).

Date	Name	Rig	GRT	Owners	LRS	L x B x D
1854	The Watsons	Smack	41	Whitehills owner.	N/A	Unknown
1855	The Banffshire	Schooner	85 NM 136 OM	Various owners, Banff.	7A1	79' x 19.9' x 10.4'
1856	Countess of Seafield	Brig	157	Watson and Co., Banff.	7A1	95' x 23.1' x 13'
1857	Woodbine	Schooner	330 OM	Captain Paterson.	 8A1	114' x 25.2' x 15'
1857	Lady Abercromby	Schooner	56 NM 100 OM	Bailie Dallas, Macduff.	 7A1	Unknown
1858	The Lady Gordon Cumming	Schooner	120 NM 189 OM	Mr James Calder, Findhorn.	7A1	87' x 21.5' x 10.5' Approx.
1860	The Lily	Yacht	10	Captain McDonald.	Unknown	Unknown
1860	Perseverance.	Brig	196 NNM	Adam, Aberdeen.	 7A1	100' x 24' x 13'4"
1860	Brick	Smack	37	W. Brodie, Dunbar.	7A1	60.5' x 15.5; x 7.1'
1861	Isa	Schooner	86 NM	James Calder, Forres.	7A1	76' x 20' x 10.2'
1862	Sir Robert Calder	Schooner	160 NM 246 OM	James Calder, Forres.	8A1	92' x 23.8" x 11'4"
1863	Earl of Fife	Schooner	232 NM	Mr Adam.	7A1	112' x 25' x 14'
1864	Deveronside	Schooner	235 NM 320 OM	Provost Adam & Co.	5A1	109' x 25' x 14'

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Banff. (Continued).

Date	Name	Rig	GRT	Owners	LRS	L x B x D
1864	Matilda Calder	Schooner	160	James Calder, Findhorn.	7A1	106' x 23'8" x 11'7"
1865	Olivia	Schooner	80	Provost Cruickshank, Macduff	7A1	68' x 30' x 9'6"
1865	Isabella	Schooner	186 OM 146 NM	James Calder, Findhorn.	7A1	94'x 23'6"x 11'
1866	Fairwind (Fair Wind) LRS	Schooner	96 NM	J. Watson & Co.	5A1	80' x 21½' x 10'
1866	Mayflower or May Flower	Schooner	182 NM	Captain George Smith, Portsoy.	 8A1	100' x 23'6" x 12'8"
1866	Paragon	Schooner	99	Mr Bremner, Wick.	 7A1	78' x 21'6" x 10'
1867	Jane Simpson	Schooner	94	John Simpson & Co., Banff.	7A1	77' x 21'6" x 10'
1867	Lady of the Lake	Schooner	75 NM 123 OM	Allan & Son, Merchants, Portsoy.	7A1	70' x 19'6" x 9'6"
1867	Maggie	Schooner	100	George and David R. Simpson, Wick.	A1	82' x 21 6" x 10' 2"
1868	Pioneer	Schooner	86	Mr Georgison, Merchant, & Co., Wick.	7A1	74' x 20' x 9'6"
1868	Forresian	Schooner	193	James Calder, Forres, Morayshire.	9A1	104.6' x 23.7' x 12.7'
1869	Forward	Schooner	140	John Watson, (speculatively).	7A1	95' x 24' x 11'

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Banff. (Continued).

Date	Name	Rig	GRT	Owners	LRS	L x B x D
1869	Guiding Star	Schooner	248	Captain Smith, Portsoy.	9A1	120' x 25'6" x 14'
1870	Amy.	Schooner	140 NNM	Bisset, Robertson, and Moir.	8A1	85' x 22' 6" 14' 6"
1870	Tarlair.	Schooner	91	Macduff Commercial Company.	✠ 9A1	77' x 20.8' x 10'
1870	Agnes M. Gordon.	Brigantine	128	Macduff Commercial Company.	9A1	87' x 22.6' x 11.6'
1871	Flower of Banff Or Flower o' Banff	Brigantine	136	Watson, Banff.	9A1	86' x 28.8' x 11.8'
1872	Bella	Schooner	97	Simpson, Wick.	9A1	80.5' x 19.4' x 10.3'
1872	Sovereign	Schooner	82	Henry Munro, Banff.	9A1	80' x 22' 6" x 9' 6"
1872	Cairnrankie	Schooner	83	Various Banff and Macduff.	9A1	74' x 20' 4" x 9' 6"
1873	Alice	Schooner	111	John Bisset, Insch, Aberdeen.	9A1	84' 6" x 21' x 10' 6".
1873	Norseman	Schooner	125	John Walker Simpson, Banff.	9A1	87.7' x 21.9' x 10.9'
1874	Andrew Longmore	Schooner	143	James G. S. Longmore and George Mair, Banff.	9A1	93.4' x 23' x 11.4'
1874	Fleetwing	Schooner	111	Various Banff owners.	9A1	85.2' x 21.7' x 10.3'

Vessels built by John Watson, Shipbuilder - Banff. (Continued).

Date	Name	Rig	GRT	Owners	LRS	L x B x D
1875	Mary	Schooner	110	Alexander Robertson, Banff.	9A1	86.2' x 21.5' x 10.3'
1875	John Watson	Schooner	220	George Steele, Seafield, Banff.	10A1	112.9' x 25.3' x 12.8'
1875	Olivia	Schooner	80	Alexander Robertson, Macduff.	9A1	74' x 19.2' x 9.3'
1876	Fair Wind	Schooner	156	Alexander Watson, Banff.	9A1	92' x 23' 8" x 10' 11"
1876	Victoria	Schooner	108	Henry Munro, Banff.	10A1	86.5' x 21.7' x 10.3'
1876	Water Lily	Schooner	110	Donald Georgeson, Wick.	9A1	86.4' x 21.6' x 10.3'
1877	Elizabeth	Schooner	86	James Stephen, Wick.	9A1	79' x 20' x 9.2'
1877	Victor	Schooner	123	Charles Taylor, Portsoy.	✠ 9A1	90' x 22.4' x 10.6'
1878	Helen West	Schooner	114	Andrew West, Macduff.	9A1	87' x 21.6' x 10.6'
1878	Lady of the Lake	Schooner	91	John Bremner, Portsoy.	9A1	78.5' x 20.6' x 9.4'
1878 /79	Glenboyn	Barquentine	227	John Bremner, Portsoy.	✠ 11A1	111.5' x 24.7' x 12.4'

Vessels Built by John Watson at Whitehills.

1841, 17th February: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported that on Saturday 6th February a schooner was launched at Blackpots Harbour, Whitehills. On the following Monday evening

to celebrate the event, a fine ball took place in Whitehills. At the ball an elderly gentleman remarked that at the age of fifteen he had assisted in planting the wood on the hills of Boyndie, of which the vessel was built. It seems very likely, but not confirmed that **John Watson** built this vessel. The vessel name was not stated.

Friends (1848).

She was built as a small coaster to carry general cargo.

1848, 14th March: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, reported as follows: *“LAUNCH. — There was launched on the 6th inst., from the building yard of **Mr John Watson**, Whitehills, a fine clipper schooner, named **"The Friends"**. This vessel, which is, we believe, the property of Mr Peter Dow, Buckie, is an excellent specimen of workmanship and skill, and presents every appearance of proving a fast sailer.”*

1848, 15th March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal, reported as follows: *“BLACKPOTS. 6th March. — LAUNCH. — A beautiful little schooner, built by **Mr John Watson**, Whitehills, was to-day launched here, and glided into her future element in grand style. She is 44 tons register, and reflects great credit on her enterprising builder. Immediately after the launch, the vessel was loaded, with drain tiles, from Messrs. Alexander Duncan & Co. Brick and Tile-Works, and sailed for Findhorn.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Friends.	
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.	
Launch Date	6 th March 1848.	
Owner(s)	Mr Peter Dow , Buckie.	
Registered Port	Banff.	Official No.: Unknown.
GRT	44 tons.	
Length	52 feet, 6 inches. (16.00m).	
Breadth	15 feet, 3 inches. (4.65m).	
Depth	8 feet. (2.44m).	
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Oak, birch, elm, and fir. Decks made of yellow pine.	
Figurehead	Unknown.	
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 4A1. LRS Surveyor: James McDonald. I.B.: Iron bolts.	1857 (AE1).
Other information	1850: Master - Alexander Gordon (LRS). 1857: Master - William Tilson and registered at Lynn.	
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.	

Hero (1849).

She was built speculatively, intended to carry general cargo, and was later described as a Banff coaster.

1849, 1st May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT WHITEHILLS.** *On the forenoon of Tuesday last, a considerable crowd gathered in and around the building-yard of Mr Watson, Whitehills, to witness the launch of a fine new schooner, 72 tons, O. M., which had just been completed by that spirited builder. A few minutes after twelve o'clock, all things being ready, on a signal being given, the props were withdrawn, and the new vessel glided into the waters, amidst the cheers of the crowd, the ceremony usually observed at bestowing a name, being at the same moment performed by Master George Forbes. The new vessel bears the name of the "Hero," and is another addition to the shipping of our port, the principal owner, we believe, being Mr Bartlett, brewer. She is to be commanded by Captain Alex. Slater, late master of the Sir Alexander Duff. In the evening of the same day, the owner of the "Hero," with a party of the shipowners and merchants of the port, and the builder, carpenters, and others engaged the vessel, met together to a supper, in St John's Lodge, Banff. Mr Bartlett occupied the chair, and Captain Paterson officiated as croupier. After the usual loyal toasts, the chairman gave the health "Lord Fife," and specially alluded to the interest which his Lordship took in everything which concerned the prosperity of the town and district. Captain McDonald, Lloyd's surveyor, then gave the "Hero," eulogising the vessel as of a very handsome model, as one of a light draught of water, and fitted at the same time carry a large cargo. He was glad to see the spirit of the shipowners of the port, and hoped that their enterprise would meet with its reward. The Chairman then rose and gave the health of the builder, Mr John Watson. He had already been very successful in providing good vessels, and the 'Hero' gave every evidence of keeping up the high character of the builder. Mr Watson had lately become tacksman of the Patent Slip, at the Harbour, and he hoped that his occupancy would prove as profitable to himself, as it was serviceable to the community. Mr Watson returned thanks. The Chairman then gave the health of Mr Munro, who is to furnish the ropes and sails for the new craft — which was duly acknowledged. The Croupier next gave the "Owners of the 'Hero'," which was acknowledged by the chairman. A variety of toasts followed. The Croupier gave the health of Mr A. Simpson of Nisbet and Co., of Mr J. Simpson, merchant, and of Mr D. Smart, cattle-dealer; and the Chairman gave the health of Mr Garden Grant, merchant, of Captain McDonald, of Mr Redpath, collector of customs, Mr Bold, comptroller, Mr Miller of Alloa, late comptroller at this port, and the memory of the late Mr Nicol, this last toast being drank in silence. Captain McDonald next gave the health of the Chairman, alluding to the enterprise shown by Mr Bartlett in carrying on works which afforded employment to many industrious people; and specially referring to the tan-yard which he had re-established, and the windmill had so lately erected in connection with it.*

Hero (1849). (Continued).

Mr Bartlett returned thanks. Captain Macdonald next gave the health of Captain Paterson, in connection with the Harbour Trust, of which he was a member thought the Trust deserved the thanks of the community, and of the shipowners in particular, for the spirited manner in which they were carrying on improvements at the harbour. He expressed his high approval of the proposal to place booms on the south entrance to the old harbour, and he thought the shipowners would be but consulting their own best interests most willingly agreeing to pay an additional penny per ton, if the Trustees provided the booms in question. There was no harbour in the Moray Firth where the charges upon shipping were so low as they were in Banff. In Fraserburgh, the shipowners willingly paid 6d. per registered ton, and Lossiemouth the same, while in Banff they only paid 1d., and grumbled about paying another penny, when, by doing so, they might secure a confessedly great advantage. Captain Paterson returned thanks; other toasts followed, and the meeting was prolonged till an early hour."

Schooner for Sale.

THE Schooner "HERO" of BANFF, will be Exposed for Sale, by Public Roup, in MARSHALL'S HOTEL, on FRIDAY, the 20th current, at 12 o'clock Noon. She is a handy little vessel of 54 Tons Register, and can be sent to sea without expense, except provisions. Apply to W.M. BARTLET.

GEO. REBURN, Auctioneer.

BANFF, 9th November 1857.

Advertisement for sale of the schooner 'Hero' in the Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 17th November 1857.

**SMALL VESSEL FOR SALE. —**

The **HERO**, of Banff, 54 tons register; carries 85 tons on about 8 feet water; sails fast; is in good condition, and well found. The vessel is at Port-Dundas, where she can be seen. If not sold immediately, will be sent on a voyage.

For particulars, apply to: GIBSON & CLARK, 61 Oswald Street.

Advertisement for sale of the schooner 'Hero' in the North British Daily Mail, 27th January 1859.

Hero (1849). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Hero.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	24 th April 1849.
Owner(s)	Mr William Bartlett , brewer, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 17974.
GRT	54 tons N.M. (72 tons O.M.)
Length	57 feet, 3 inches. (17.45m).
Breadth	17 feet. (5.18m)
Depth	7 feet, 4 inches. (2.24m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. English Oak, Elm, and Fir.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class: 5A1. I.B. – Iron bolts.
Other information	1857, 20th November: Bought at auction for £281 by Baillie (later Provost) Dallas, Macduff. (Equivalent to approx. £24,000 in 2022). By 1860: Registered at Glasgow.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1860, 8th September: She was abandoned off Ballycastle after a collision with the brig 'Ceres' (120 tons) of Belfast, Captain Hugh Donnelly. (See press article below for more information).

1860, 18th September: The Glasgow Herald reported as follows: *“Report of Capt. Hugh Donnelly, master of the brig ‘Ceres’, 120 tons, of Belfast, from Troon for Londonderry, with coals: - Left Troon on the 5th inst., and proceeded until the 8th. At 9pm, the weather fine and clear, and the wind N. by E., was working through Rathlin Sound. Saw a schooner working through also. The ‘Ceres’ had her lights duly placed, and when on the port tack met the schooner on the starboard tack. He kept the helm of the ‘Ceres’ hard to port, which she answered and fell off. Shouted to the schooner to port his helm also, but she came close under the brig’s bow before she luffed, and both vessels came into collision, when the captain and one of the men of the schooner jumped on board the brig, shortly after which the vessel parted, and observed the schooner dropping towards the land, and lost sight of her. Found the ‘Ceres’ making water; set the pumps to work and was able to keep her clear; and the wind becoming more favorable, stood on for Lough Foyle, and arrived at Londonderry on Sunday the 9th. Lost cutwater and figurehead, jibboom, etc. Captain Hamilton, who jumped on board, reported that the schooner the ‘Ceres’ was in collision with was the ‘Hero’, of Glasgow; and he and the man left in the pilot boat at the entrance of Lough Foyle.”*

Hero (1849). (Continued).

1860, 19th September: The Glasgow Herald reported as follows: *“Report of Capt. Andrew Hamilton of the schooner ‘Hero’, of Glasgow: - At 8.30p.m. tacked to the westward, with our lights, lighted in their proper places. At 8.35 p.m., the brigantine schooner ‘Ceres’, belonging to Redbay, Belfast, standing to the eastward, with her port tacks on board, wind N.N.W., spearing to come into collision with the schooner ‘Hero’, immediately rung the bell in due time for the ‘Ceres’ to keep clear of the ‘Hero’; put the helm to port, and brought her head up to the wind, when the ‘Ceres’ struck the ‘Hero’ on the port bow, carrying away headstays and foremast and all the ‘Hero’s’ stanchions, to the main-rigging, her covering plank and paintstrake. The master, A. Hamilton, and Daniel McNichol, seaman, jumped on board the ‘Ceres’ to save their lives, leaving the mate and boy on board the ‘Hero’ in a sinking state. The mate called out for a rope’s-end from the ‘Ceres’, which was refused by the master of the ‘Ceres’, who called out that none of them will come here. The master of the ‘Ceres’ made no attempt whatsoever to save the lives of the mate and boy who were left on board the sinking ‘Hero’. The crew of the ‘Hero’ lost all clothes and property but what they had on their backs. – Report by John McMillan, mate of the schooner ‘Hero’, of Glasgow: - Was leaving the ‘Hero’ in a sinking state, I, the mate, called out to those on board the ‘Ceres’, “Were they going to leave me and the boy here,” but I got no answer whatever. The boy and I tried to get our boat over the side, which with great difficulty we managed; at the same time the foremast of the ‘Hero’ was lying against the mainmast. Managed to get into the boat, and when we left the ‘Hero’ she appeared to be sinking fast. In about ten minutes after, we pulled back to see if the ‘Hero’ was going down, when we saw that the mainmast was down also. We could not attempt to go near her. We pulled for the shore at Bally Castle, and reached the shore at eleven o’clock on Saturday the 8th of September. The captain and Daniel Nicholl got on shore in the pilot boat at Innishowen Head. All saved.”*

Vessels Built by John Watson at Banff.

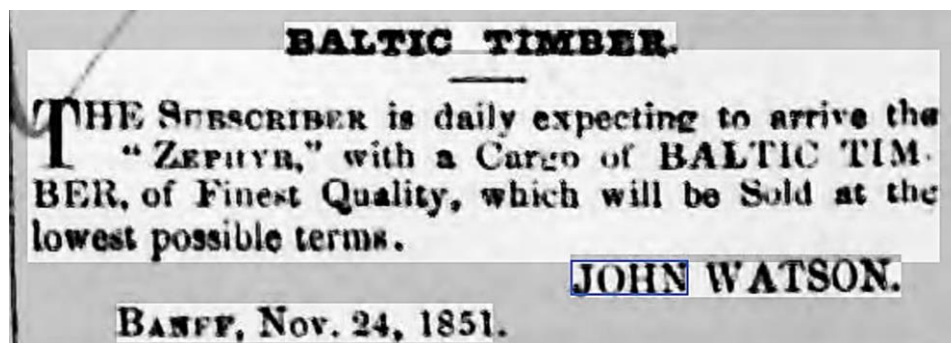
Zephyr (1850).

She was a general cargo carrier, built speculatively in the hope of selling her during construction or shortly after completion. This was a practice carried out by some shipbuilders in lean times to keep the workforce gainfully employed. However, it seems that **John Watson** couldn't get a price for her, so he put her to sea himself. Unfortunately, she stranded and became a wreck, at only 2-years old.

1850, 16th April: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser published the following advertisement: *"NEW VESSEL FOR SALE. – THE Subscriber has for Sale at BANFF, a NEW VESSEL, of 148 tons O.M., 108 tons, N.M., of English Oak Frame, is Copper-fastened in the bottom, and is classed eight years A1 at Lloyd's. Length, 71 feet; extreme breadth, 21 feet 9 inches. Will carry a large cargo on an easy draught of water, and can be ready for sea in a few weeks. Reference – Captain McDonald, Lloyd's Surveyor, Banff. JOHN WATSON, BANFF, March 30, 1850."*

1850, 30th July: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, reported as follows: *"LAUNCH. – On Thursday last (25th), a launch took place from the building-yard of Mr Watson, shipbuilder, Banff. The day being extremely fine, there was very large concourse of spectators, amid the cheers and to the great gratification of whom the vessel went off in gallant style, gliding into the waters with the utmost ease and precision. The craft was much admired by the numerous judges of nautical matters who witnessed the launch, and who were enthusiastic in expressing their admiration of the handsome build and "fine water stroke" of the vessel. The schooner is, indeed, of a very beautiful model, and sits most gracefully on the water. She, whose tonnage is 108 N.M., has been named the "Zephyr," and has been constructed on speculation by the builder, who, we understand, means, unless she is sold in the interim, to have her fitted out and sent to sea."*

1851, 21st January: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *"Marriages. – At Macduff, on the 14th inst., Captain James Taylor of the schooner 'Zephyr' of Banff to Elizabeth, daughter of John Watson, Macduff."*



Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser - Tuesday 25th November 1851.

Zephyr (1850). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Zephyr.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	25 th July 1850.
Owner(s)	John Watson , shipbuilder, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	108 tons NM. 148 tons OM.
Length	71 feet (21.64m).
Breadth	21 feet, 9 inches (6.63m).
Depth	Approx. 10 feet (3m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. English oak frame. IB – Iron Bolts. Her hull was sheathed in copper.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 8A1. Lloyds Surveyor: Captain McDonald.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	20th October 1852: She stranded on the Scaw Reef, Jutland, master Captain Taylor, all hands were saved. See below for more information).

1852, 2nd November: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, reported as follows: *“Wreck of the ‘Zephyr’ of Banff – We regret to say that this vessel, while on her passage from Peterhead to Stettin, was stranded, on the 20th ult., on the Scaw Reef, Jutland. The accident occurred between two and three o’clock in the morning. All the crew are safe. The following is an extract from a letter received by **Mr J. Watson**, the managing owner here, from the master, Capt. Taylor. The letter was written on the day after the accident: - “The sea running very heavy at the time, I could get no assistance from the land, nor could I put out a boat or anchor. As she had only about the length of herself to go to be over the reef, I hove overboard a part of her cargo: but, am sorry to say, without effect, as the gale increased towards afternoon, and before dark at night we were obliged to leave with the lifeboat. The weather got very fine this afternoon, so that we got aboard again, unbent the sails, and landed the same, as well as all the moveables, and a part of the cargo, and I think if the weather keeps moderate, with the wind, as it now is, we may succeed in landing the rest of the cargo tomorrow. The ‘Zephyr’ is now about three feet in the sand, with almost six feet water in the hold, so that I begin to fear she will become a wreck.” The ‘Zephyr’ is quite a new vessel, having been launched last year from the building-yard of **Mr Watson**. She is a vessel of 108 tons N.M.”*

Zephyr (1850). (Continued).

1850, 28th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“VESSELS.** — We understand that the **“Tom Duff”** (110 tons) of this port has been sold to Mr Alexander Winchester, shipowner, Inverness. Our enterprising shipbuilder **Mr Watson** has a beautiful schooner on the stocks, all ready for launching, which is to be hoped will find a purchaser at an early period.”



Banff Harbour with two 2-masted vessels c1900. (Photographer unknown).

In the above photograph it looks like both vessels are sitting on the bottom, so they would only get in and out of harbour at a suitable tide. Banff Harbour was notorious for silting up.

Note: The vessel on the left has a figurehead.

Also, on the east quay barrels can be seen, perhaps barrels of salt herring destined for export.

Zephyr (1850). (Continued).

The following advertisement in the Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 7th October 1851, shows that **John Watson** put up for sale his house in New Street, Whitehills after he set up as a shipbuilder at Banff harbour.

FOR SALE.

THOSE HOUSES in the NEW STREET of WHITEHILLS, belonging to, and lately occupied by, **John Watson**, Shipbuilder. The Buildings comprise three commodious Rooms, with Kitchen and Scullery, besides Garrets and Offices; together with a large House, unfinished, used as a Workshop, but which can be fitted up as a Dwelling House at a small expense. The Buildings are all in connection, and are in good repair, being almost new.

Apply to **ALEXANDER WATSON**, Whitehills, or to **JOHN WATSON**, Shipbuilder, Banff.

BANFF, Sept. 29, 1851.

Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser - Tuesday 25 March 1851:**TO TIMBER MERCHANTS.**

WANTED, TO PURCHASE, BY THE SUBSCRIBER,

A QUANTITY of OAK, ELM, ASH, or LARCH CROOKS, to side from 4 to 8 inches, to be laid down at the HARBOUR of BANFF, or the nearest Shipping Port.

ALSO,

A Quantity of LARCH and BEECH, fit for Planking; and also, a few Cargoes of PIT PROPS.

Parties having such to dispose of will please state their prices, within fourteen days from this date, and also the quantity of each they can supply.

JOHN WATSON, Shipbuilder.

BANFF, March 20, 1851.

This advertisement gives an indication of the types of timber **John Watson** was using for shipbuilding at this date.

Victory (1851).

She was a fishing boat, built for owners in Whitehills.

1851, 16th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“On Wednesday last, a fine smack, named the **“Victory,”** was launched, at Banff, for eight Whitehills fishermen, the owners, and who are to constitute the whole crew of this little craft. The vessel is from the building-yard of **Mr Watson**, who has expended his skill to great advantage in her build. She is of 36 tons new, and 61 tons old measurement. She has been built specially for the deep-sea fishing; and is fitted up with all the necessaries for the cure of fish. As the very nature of he intended occupation implies that her crew shall, for protracted periods, make their “home upon the deep”, there is ample berthage accommodation. There is a cabin fore and aft – the latter being about 12 feet square; and the dormitories look snug, comfortable nooks, which most people, we suppose, will be inclined to prefer, as resting places, to the stern of an open boat. The centre apartment, 27 feet long, and 15½ wide, is appropriated to the stowage and cure of fish; and fittings up run along both sides of this section of the vessel, to be used in curing. All kinds of fish – cod, ling, haddocks, etc. – will be taken. In ordinary phrase, with the crew, “all will be fish that comes to their nets.” The crew are all young, able-bodied men, of sober and industrious habits, and could hardly be equalled, we suppose, by any eight fishermen to be got on the coast. They have had the courage to venture on a new tack – to adopt what is here a new style of fishing; and we trust that, when their gallant little craft goes to sea, which will be in the course of eight to ten days, they will meet with that success which their enterprise so truly deserves.”*

“Launch Dinner. — After the launch of the **Victory,**” on Wednesday last, the owners, with a large party belonging to the port, numbering, in all, upwards of thirty, sat down to an excellent dinner, in John’s Lodge — Mr Bartlet in the chair, and Captain McDonald croupier. After the usual toasts, the Croupier gave “the Owners of the **‘Victory,’** with great success to them”, and, in doing so, expressed his warm approval of the new style of vessel, which would enable her crew, instead of sitting cooped in the boat’s stern, their sole shelter a piece of tarpaulin, to have comfortable cabins, where they would get perfect accommodation, and “something warm,” to enable them to keep their watch. He hoped the example set by the Whitehills fisherman would generally followed along the coast. Other toasts were then given, as the health of Lord Fife; of Mr Adam, banker; success to the harbour improvements; a steamer for our own port, etc., etc.; and the evening was spent in the most agreeable manner.”

Victory (1851). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Victory.
Rig	Smack.
Launch Date	10 th September 1851.
Owner(s)	Eight Whitehills fishermen (All crew members).
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 6849.
GRT	36 tons NM. (51 tons OM).
Length of keel	Approx. 56 feet (17.10m).
Breadth	Approx. 16 feet (4.9m).
Depth	Approx. 7 feet (2.15m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Not fitted.
Classification	Unknown.
Other information	By 1870: Owned by George Cheyne, Fraserburgh. By 1880: Owned by Alexander Main, No. 10 Park Street, Nairn.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1889, 22nd August: She was totally wrecked at Fort George, all hands saved.

1853, 6th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser published the following advertisement: ***“FOR SALE – THE Smack “VICTORY”. 50 Tons O.M. as now lying in the Harbour of Banff, ready for sea. Apply to Mr Watson, Shipbuilder, Banff.”***

1854, 24th January: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: ***“SHIPBUILDING. – Our enterprising builder, Mr Watson, having sold the schooner of 120 tons he had in hand building, has just laid down the keel of another schooner of eighty tons, for which he has a commission from Findhorn owners. The former vessel will be ready for launching in April; the latter is to be at sea in August.”***

1860, 18th October: The John o' Groat Journal reported that the sloop, '**Victory**', of Banff, had parted from one of her anchors and was driven onshore, and that she would not get off before the next spring tide, however she was thought to have sustained little damage.

Matilda (1854).

She was built to carry general cargo and described by LRS as a Banff coaster.

1854, 19th May: The Elgin Courier reported as follows: *“BANFF – LAUNCH. – A fine vessel, built by Mr Watson, Banff, for Mr James Calder, Findhorn, was launched from the former port on Friday last. The vessel (names the “Matilda” is a neat and substantially built schooner of 91 tons register, old, and 136 new.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Matilda.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	12 th May 1854.
Owner(s)	James Calder, Esq., Findhorn.
Registered Port	Findhorn. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	91 tons O.M. 136 tons N.M.
Length	Approx. 80 feet. (24.38m).
Breadth	Approx 20 feet. (6.10m).
Depth	Approx 10 feet. (3.05m).
Construction	Wood, oak and larch, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1.
Other information	1854 / 1858: Master A. Munro.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown. Still sailing in 1860.

1856, 20th March: The Inverness Courier reported as follows: *“Accident to the “Matilda” of Findhorn. — About four o clock last Thursday morning, the schooner “Kinloss”, Mr George Baxter, master, and the “Matilda,” Mr A. Munro, master, both belonging to Findhorn, and proceeding in opposite directions, came into collision off Troup head, in this neighbourhood. The latter vessel suffered considerable damage; her bowsprit, fore-topsail, and top gallant yards were carried away, the bends torn up, and sails split. After clearing away the wreck, however, and rigging jury spars, during which operation the “Matilda,” was drifted considerably to sea, the master was enabled to proceed to Findhorn, but being unable to enter that harbour, returned to Banff, where she is now discharging coals. The vessel came into our harbour on Friday afternoon in a somewhat disabled condition. The “Matilda,” we may add, was built at Banff. — Banffshire Journal.”*

Matilda (1854). (Continued).

1854, 16th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"LAUNCH.** — *On Friday last a vessel built our enterprising townsman, **Mr Watson**, was launched from his building-yard here amid the acclamations of a large concourse of people. The vessel is a neat and substantially built schooner of 91 tons register, old, and 136 new. She has been built for James Calder, Esq., Findhorn, and will hail from that port. She is named the "**Matilda**," the ceremony of "christening" being performed by a daughter of the builders. The "**Matilda**" will be ready for sea in the course of week or two. She presents every appearance of proving a first class sailer, and at the same time particularly strong and well built. In the evening a large party dined with the builder and owner and captain in St John's Lodge — Captain McDonald, Banff, in the chair, and W. Bartlet, Esq., croupier. The Chairman was supported by the owner, Mr Calder, Mr Nicol, from Findhorn, and Mr Murdoch, from Forres. After the loyal toasts, the Chairman gave the health of the owner together with success to the new ship, which, by the way is named after Mr Calder's daughter. Mr Calder returned thanks. The Chairman next gave the health of the master of the "**Matilda**". Captain Munro, who returned thanks. The health of the builder, **Mr Watson**, was also given by the Chairman, who said that, as Lloyd's surveyor, he had surveyed the vessel in her whole progress, adding that she was a well built and well fastened vessel, the timber of excellent quality - all picked timber, indeed - furnished by the owner himself, an extensive wood merchant. **Mr Watson** returned thanks. The health's of the Chairman and Croupier were also given, and duly honoured and responded to. A number of other toasts were given, and the evening was further enlivened by several excellent songs; the meeting breaking up to allow the ship-carpenters and sailors and their wives and sweethearts to hold the ball usually celebrated on these occasions, and which was itself an excellent affair. - **Mr Watson** has another vessel in the course of construction, which, we are glad to hear, has been bought by a company in town, and is to be added to the tonnage of our harbour. She is considerably larger than the one launched on Friday."*

1860, 17th July: The Inverness Advertiser and Ross-shire Chronicle published the following advertisement:

FOR SALE

TO BE SOLD, by Public Roup, in MATTHEW'S HOTEL, Findhorn, on SATURDAY, the 21st July 1860, at Three o'clock p.m., the schooner "**MATILDA**", of Findhorn, port of Inverness, 91 tons Register, built in Banff in 1854, and classed A1 at Lloyd's, 7 years, with all her Appurtenances, and now lying at Findhorn for inspection; carries a large cargo on a light draught of water;

sails fast, and is a strong handy vessel.

For further particulars, apply to James Calder, ship-owner, Findhorn; or to John Murdoch, farmer, Cassieford, by Forres. Findhorn 6th July 1860.

Lady Gray (1854).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have worked as a Banff coaster and made passage to the Baltic.

1854, 15th August: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *"LAUNCH. — On Tuesday last, a new vessel, built by our enterprising townsman **Mr Watson**, was launched from his building-yard here — the second in the course of three months. The number of people who assembled to witness the launch was very large, and after all preparations had been made, and the order given by **Mr Watson** to have the rope snapped, the vessel glided away beautifully into her future element, amid prolonged cheers from the multitude of spectators. The christening ceremony was performed by Miss Bruce, Banff, daughter of the late Capt. Bruce; — the name given being the "**Lady Gray**." The vessel is the largest which has been built at Banff for a great length of time, and is owned by a co-partnership in the town. She measures 207 tons old, and 136 new. She is to be engaged in the foreign trade, and is to be commanded by Captain Ironside, late of the "**Stag**" of Banff. The vessel is beautifully constructed, and is substantially built of the best material that can possibly be had. In the afternoon the owners entertained a number of their friends at dinner in St John's Lodge. Capt. McDonald occupied the chair, and Mr W. Hossack, merchant, acted as croupier. After the usual loyal toasts were given, the Chairman gave success to the new vessel, the "**Lady Gray**." He then gave the health of the Owners, coupled with Mr James Bayley, tobacconist, who returned thanks. The Chairman then gave the health of the master of the vessel. Captain Ironside, who returned thanks. The Croupier gave in succession the health of the builder. Mr Watson, and Mrs Gray, Banff, after the latter of whom the ship is named. The Chairman gave the Earl of Fife; and Mr Watson, gas manager, gave the Earl of Seafield. The Croupier gave the Duchess of Gordon. Huntly Lodge, Mr Frazer, Sandlaw, gave the Chairman. A number of other toasts followed, and the afternoon was spent very pleasantly. A ball took place in the evening, at which dancing was kept up with great glee until a late hour in the morning."*

1854, 19th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, reported as follows: *"The "**Lady Gray**." — This newly built ship, lately launched from **Mr Watson's** yard here, put to sea for the first time on the morning of Friday last. The vessel has part of a cargo — from 600 to 700 barrels of herrings, and proceeds to Wick to have her complement made up, whence she is to sail for Stettin. The vessel, as was expected, promises to be a first class sailer. A few of the owners and some friends had a two or three hours' sail on board after she left the harbour. Besides being a very fast sailer, she carries a large cargo for her measured tonnage. We may add, in proof of her sailing qualities, that on the same day which she left Banff bay at 9 o'clock a.m., she arrived at Wick at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, thus making the passage in six hours." Szczecin and Stettin are the Polish and German equivalents of the same name.*

Lady Gray (1854). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Lady Gray. (Lady Grey (LRS)).
Rig	Brig (Snow), 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	8 th August 1854.
Owner(s)	Various merchants, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 25340.
GRT	207 tons OM. 136 tons NM.
Length	80.6 feet (24.57m).
Breadth	21.5 feet (6.55m).
Depth	11.9 feet (3.63m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. Spelt ' Lady Grey ' in LRS, 1857.
Other information	1854: Master- William Ironside. 1862: Master – Alexander Smith. 1865: Owned by Allan & Co. LRS described as a barque. By 1870: Owned by Thomas Adam, Banff. By 1874: Owned by A. Shearer, Aberdeen.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1875, 8th August: The Dundee Courier reported as follows: <i>“WRECK OF A BANFF BRIG. – During the prevalence of a dense fog at about eleven o’clock on Sunday night the brig ‘Lady Grey’, of Banff, in ballast from Aberdeen to Sunderland, struck on the rocks a little to the north of the lighthouse on Souter Point, and afterwards became a total wreck. The whole of the crew were saved by getting ashore in their own boat. The captain of the vessel, in answer to the inquiries made by Mr Millett, engineer in charge of the lighthouse, stated that he had heard the horn at ten o’clock when between five and six miles north of the lighthouse, and subsequently also saw the light through the fog. He had made a miscalculation as to the Point. The vessel was being dismantled on Monday morning.”</i>

The Watsons (1854).


She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded Banff to Leith.

1854, 26th December: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *"LAUNCH. — There was launched on Thursday last from the building yard of **Mr Watson**, our enterprising builder here, a nice smack of 41 tons. The new vessel, which is named **"The Watsons,"** belongs to owners in the thriving fishing village of Whitehills, and is intended for coasting. **"The Watsons"** is a very smart craft, and does much credit to her builder."*

Vessel Name(s)	The Watsons.
Rig	Smack, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a running bowsprit.
Launch Date	21 st December 1854.
Owner(s)	John Watson , Whitehills.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	41 tons. (55 tons burden).
Length	Unknown.
Breadth	Unknown.
Depth	Unknown.
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Thought not to have been classed due to her small size.
Other information	1855: Master Watson. 1855, by November: Master Lovie. 1859, March: Master Noble.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Smack for Sale.

— —



THE **SMACK** "**WATSONS**" of Banff, of the Burden of 55 Tons, built at Banff in 1855, is well found in Sails and Stores, and in perfect order. Can be sent to sea without any expense whatever. is a very handy craft, and sails fast.

Apply to **JOHN WATSON**, Shipbuilder.
BANFF, 2d March 1857.

Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser 7th April 1857.

Banffshire (1855).

She was built to carry general cargo and traded for most of her life from Banff to the Baltic, but she is also known to have traded at Newcastle and Sunderland.

1855, 8th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser - Tuesday 8th May 1855, reported as follows: ***"BANFF. - LAUNCH.** – On Friday last, a fine clipper schooner, built by **Mr John Watson**, was launched from his building yard here, in presence of a large concourse of spectators. The vessel is named **"The Banffshire"**, and is owned by a company of various parties in the town. Mr A. Watson, gas manager, is ship's husband. The vessel is registered at 85 tons new, 91 second, and 136 tons old, and is to be commanded by Captain Watson, late of the **"Clunie"**. Substantially built of the best timber, **"The Banffshire"** at same time possesses all the appearance of being a first-class sailer. The launch went off well. The cheering of the crowd was quite enthusiastic as the vessel glided away with the utmost grace into her new element. In honour of the event, the owners, along with **Mr Watson**, the builder, and some friends, dined together in the St John's Mason Lodge. **Mr Watson**, the ships' husband, occupied the chair, and gave the usual loyal and patriotic toasts, which were duly honoured. Captain McDonald, who was croupier, gave success to the new ship, hoping that she might be more fortunate than the last vessel belonging to the port called by the same name. **"The Banffshire"**, a smack which was engaged for seven years in the Banff and London trade, and was wrecked upon Scotstown Head. The toast was drunk with great applause. Mr Longmore, Hilton, gave Lord Fife – good health and long life to him was duly honoured. Many other toasts followed, and the company spent the evening very pleasantly. The carpenters and their friends had a ball in the evening."*

Lastage from Newcastle.

THE Schooner "BANFFSHIRE" of Banff, Captain GEORGE WATSON will be on the Berth at Newcastle in a few days, and will take in Goods for Banff and surrounding district.

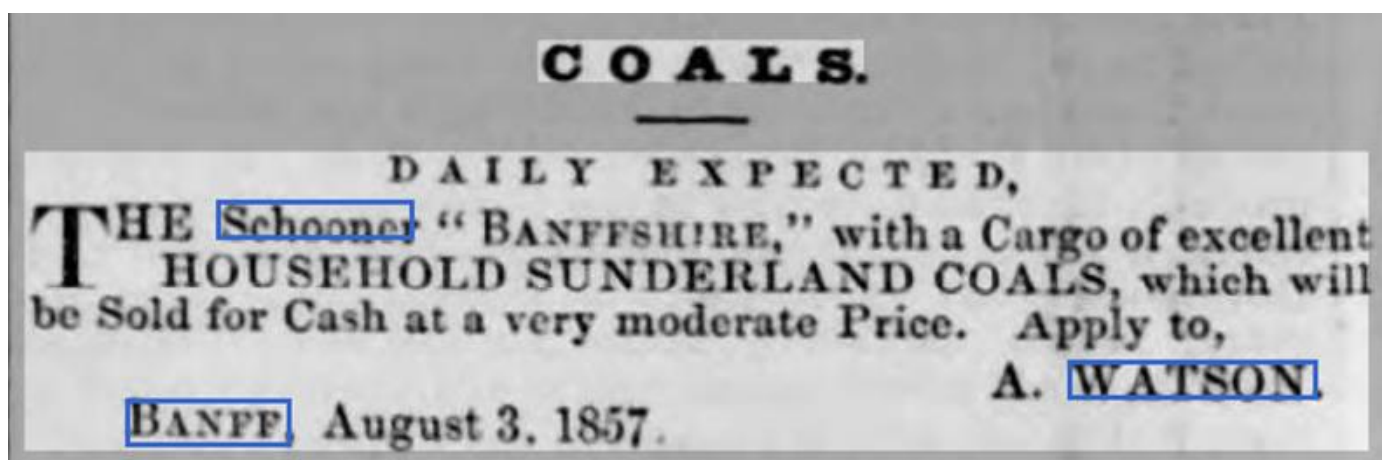
Apply to Messrs A. PARKER & COY, Newcastle; or here to
A. WATSON.

BANFF, 7th July 1856.

Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 8th July 1856.

Banffshire (1855). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Banffshire.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	4 th May 1855.
Owner(s)	Mr Alexander Watson & Co. , Banff. (Gas manager, Banff).
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 10430.
GRT	85 tons N.M. (136 tons O.M.).
Length	79 feet (24.08m).
Breadth	19.9 feet (6.07m).
Depth	10.4 feet (3.17m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. IB – Iron Bolts.
Other information	1855 / 1861: Master: Captain George Watson. 1861: Owner still Alexander Watson, Banff (LRS). 1860: Recorded in LRS 'Srprs60' – some repairs 1860.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1864, 2nd December: She was lost on passage from Dantzic (now Gdansk, Poland) to Hartlepool with a cargo of wheat. Out of a crew of six, only the mate and a boy survived. See below for Press article.



Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 18th August 1857.

Banffshire (1855). (Continued).

1864, 2nd January: The Aberdeen People's Journal reported as follows: *“Abandonment of the Schooner ‘Banffshire’— Loss Life. — Accurate intelligence was last week received in Banff concerning the abandonment the schooner ‘Banffshire’, while on a voyage from Dantzic to Hartlepool with a cargo of wheat. The ‘Banffshire’, under the command of Captain Watson, of Banff, and with four men and a boy on board, sailed from the Baltic on the 29th November last. On the fourth night after the vessel left the port, she was engulfed by a sea which carried death and destruction in its bosom. The billow swept the vessel’s decks to the very stern, carrying to a watery grave three of the brave men that formed her crew. The mate had been doing duty at the wheel, and is believed to have been saved by getting entangled in the gearing attached to the main boom; and the boy was some unaccountable means also saved. On again reaching his position, the mate with difficulty got the cabin opened, so that the captain was able to get on deck. The pumps were then sounded. The ship was found to contain a good deal of water, and was labouring so heavily that it seemed almost impossible she could much longer keep afloat. With hope all but dead, the captain set to work at one pump, and the mate aided by the boy at the other. In this manner they wrought for about twenty minutes, when the captain fell on the deck utterly exhausted and unable raise himself. About six o'clock on the Friday afternoon, Captain Watson died, never having rallied since he fell down at the pump. The mate and boy remained alone on deck during the succeeding night. In the morning the weather had slightly abated, and a vessel hove in sight. She proved to be a Danish ship, bound for Christiansand, and by her captain's orders the two survivors out of the crew of the ‘Banffshire’ were safely landed at that port, and have since arrived at their homes. The mate, Mr William Lovie, who resides in Macduff, states that the captain of the vessel by which they were rescued did all that kindness could suggest to alleviate the sufferings of himself and his companion, who belongs to Peterhead. Of the men who were thus unfortunately lost off the ‘Banffshire’, one belonged to Whitehills, one to Peterhead, and the other to Dundee. Captain Watson leaves a widow and six young children to lament his loss. - Banffshire Journal.”*

Countess of Seafield (1856).

She was built for trade with the Baltic, carrying general cargo. Later used as a coaster at Shields (1882).

She was named after Caroline Stuart, Countess of Seafield (30th June 1830 to 6th October 1911), styled The Countess Dowager from 1884 to 1911. On 30th July 1853 her husband John Charles succeeded his father as Earl of Seafield and Chief of the Clan Grant, and she became Countess of Seafield.



Caroline Stuart, Countess of Seafield.

Vessel Name(s)	Countess of Seafield.
Rig	Brig, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	7 th May 1856.
Owner(s)	Watson and Co. , Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 10459.
GRT	157 tons.
Length	95 feet (28.96m).
Breadth	23.1. feet (7.04m).
Depth	13 feet (3.96m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. British and Baltic Oak, larch, and fir. Part Iron bolts. Fir treenails.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. LRS Surveyor – William Wallis. K.N.P.F. 1864: 5A1.
Other information	1856: Master James Watt. 1865 / 1868: Owned by Patterson and Co., Banff, master J. Hodge. By 1870: Owned by Henry Munro, Banff. By 1880 / 1890: Owned by Angus Mackenzie, Inverness. 1882: Rigged as a Brigantine (LRS). By 1892: Owned by Norwegian owners.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Countess of Seafield (1856). (Continued).

1879, 23rd December: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“SCHOONER DISMASTED. – On Saturday morning, about nine o’clock, while the schooner, ‘Countess of Seafield’, of Inverness, with a cargo of stones from the Moray Firth for Newcastle, was off Buchanness, and the wind blowing very severely from the South, and while in the act of changing her course, her foremast was carried away, bringing her mainmast along with it. She was observed from the shore, and one of the tug boats, going out to her assistance, brought her safely into the harbour between two and three in the afternoon. It is said that the salvage claimed, or bargained for beforehand, is from £80 to £100.”*

Lady Abercromby (1857).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo specifically for trade along the east coast. Described in Lloyds Register as a Banff coaster.

1857, 13th January: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“BANFF - LAUNCH OF “THE LADY ABERCROMBY.” — Yesterday, shortly after noon, the schooner being constructed here by our enterprising builder, **Mr John Watson**, was launched from his yard, under the most auspicious circumstances. The day was exceedingly fine, and preparations were made in ample time to catch the highest flow of the tide. A great number of people had assembled on the quays to witness the proceedings, while many others, in groups, took advantage of a view from the Braeheads. Driving of wedges, withdrawing of temporary supports, and all preliminaries arranged, and arranged securely by the busy workmen — “a hive of industry” — under the superintendence of **Mr Watson**, the signal was given by **Mr W.**, the rope snapped, the ceremony of christening performed by Mrs Dallas, Macduff, and at the very instant the vessel was receiving the name of “**The Lady Abercromby**,” away it glided with the utmost exactness and grace, cheers arising on all sides, which were re-echoed several times, alternately from the ship, and from the quays, additional manifestations being given in universal waving of hats and bonnets. The vessel is an exceedingly smart schooner of 56 tons register N.M. and 100 tons O.M., owned by Baillie Dallas, Macduff, and intended for a general trade on the eastern coast, hailing from Macduff. All seem to agree that the architecture is the best **Mr Watson** has yet accomplished, — a further carrying out of the improved model tried on the “**Countess of Seafield**,” one of the last ships built by **Mr Watson**, the structure of which has been very highly approved. The material, believe, is excellent — larch and oak from the Forglen plantations, the property of the worthy Baronet, the name of whose no less worthy lady the good ship will bear, fortune favourable, over many*

Lady Abercromby (1857). (Continued).

*a rolling billow. On the stern, above the name, the arms of the Forglen family are beautifully painted, and the elegant execution of this little piece of workmanship does credit to the skill of the painter, Mr C. Innes. The new schooner is to be commanded by Captain Yell, late of the "Mary" of Macduff, another of Bailie Dallas's vessels, which, to the credit of his enterprise, are becoming rather numerous. At four o'clock, Mr Dallas entertained large party of friends to dinner in the Fife Arms Hotel, Banff. In the duties of the chair he was supported by Provost Cruickshank, Macduff; Mr Wood, Mr Adam, and Mr Coutts, Banff; Bailie McEarchen, Macduff — Captain McDonald acting as croupier. Mr Marshall's excellent viands having got full justice, the company enjoyed a very pleasant evening, drinking heartily to the usual loyal toasts proposed from the chair, and a flowing bumper with the greatest enthusiasm, to the success of the new ship, "**The Lady Abercromby**," given by Captain McDonald, and acknowledged by Mr Dallas. Among the other toasts were — James Duff, Esq., M.P., from the chair; George S. Duff, Esq., M.P., by the croupier; Sir George S. Abercromby, and Lady Abercromby in succession, by Mr Adam; the Earl of Fife, Mr Wood; the Earl of Seafield, by Mr Coutts; the Provost and Magistrates of Banff and Macduff; the Chairman; the Croupier; Mrs Dallas; **Mr Watson**, builder; Railway Communication; the Shipping Interest: the Town and Trade of Banff and of Macduff; Captain Yell of "**The Lady Abercromby**," &c."*

1857, 20th January: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: "**The SCHOONER "LADY ABERCROMBY"** — *On the night of Monday week, Mr Watson's ship carpenters here, with their friends and sweethearts, had, usual, a ball on the occasion of the launch of "**The Lady Abercromby**."* They enjoyed themselves right merrily until an advanced hour the following morning. St John's Lodge, Seatown, where the ball was held, was gaily hung round with an elegant set of colours presented to the new ship by Lady Abercromby of Forglen, who also, we believe, sent handsome donation to defray the expenses of the ball."

Lady Abercromby (1857). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Lady Abercromby.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	12 th January 1857.
Owner(s)	Baillie Alexander Dallas, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	56 tons, NM. (100 tons OM). 95tons deadweight
Length	65 feet, 3 inches (19.89m).
Breadth	18 feet, 3 inches (5.56m).
Depth	8 feet, 9 inches (2.67m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Larch and Baltic oak, yellow pine decks, and part iron bolts.
Figurehead	Unknown. (On her stern, above the name, the arms of Abercromby of Forglen were painted).
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. ✠ Built under Special Survey. LRS Surveyor – William Wallis.
Other information	1857: Master, Archibald Yell. By 1861: Owned by F. Robertson and registered at Peterhead. (LR).
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

✠	1	Lady Aber-	A. Yell	56	Banff	1857	A. Dallas	Macd'ff	Bnf. Coaster	7	A	1
		cromby Sr pt I.	B.		L&O.							1

Lloyds Register entry, 1857.

Woodbine (1857).

She was built to carry general cargo and was at the time of her launch **the largest vessel built in Banff**, and still is. She is known to have traded from London to Algoa Bay (South Africa), at least between 1861 and 1863 with Captain James Wilson.

1857, 11th August: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: "**BANFF - LAUNCH OF THE "WOODBINE" - Mr Watson, shipbuilder here, took advantage of the tide on Saturday morning last so early as two o'clock, to launch the new ship he has been for some time constructing. Though the weather was bad, even at that rather unseasonable hour, there was a considerable concourse of spectators.**

Woodbine (1857). (Continued).

*The launch went off beautifully, the ceremony christening being performed by Mr James Paterson, jun., son of Captain Paterson, who is to be managing owner. Another principal owner is Mr Bartlet, Banff Brewery. The vessel is a barque of 330 tons O.M., **the largest ever built in Banff.** She has the famous clipper bow, and altogether her shape satisfies to the utmost the most competent judges of naval architecture. As a proof of her superiority in materials and workmanship, it is sufficient say that she classes A1 at Lloyds for 8 years. The commander of the vessel is to be Mr James Wilson, lately captain of the "**Phoenix**," of Banff. The usual dinner took place last afternoon in Mr Marshall's Hotel, when a large company assembled, partook of a substantial and elegant repast, furnished by Mr Marshall, and enjoyed the evening very pleasantly, drinking amid numerous other toasts, luck and prosperity to the "**Woodbine.**" The ship carpenters with their friends and sweethearts had their usual ball in the evening in St John's Mason Lodge, keeping it up till a late hour in the morning, heartily and harmoniously."*

Vessel Name(s)	Woodbine.
Rig	Barque, 3 masts, 2 decks, probably a round stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	8 th August 1857.
Owner(s)	Mr James Paterson, jun. (managing owner), another principal owner was Mr Bartlet , Banff Brewery.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	330 tons OM.
Length	114 feet (34.75m).
Breadth	25.2 feet (7.68m).
Depth	15 feet (4.57m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class: 8A1. ✠ Built under Special Survey. LRS Surveyor – William Wallis.
Other information	1857 / 1863: Master James Wilson.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

1857, 6th October: The Banffshire Journal reported as follows: "***The Woodbine.***" — *The new Banff vessel, "**The Woodbine,**" of which gave a short account in our last, sailed in ballast on Saturday for Newcastle. On her departure from our harbour, she was followed by the cheers of a large concourse of spectators. She looked remarkably well in the water, and promises, we understand, to be a regular clipper.*"

The Lady Gordon Cumming (1858).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at the Baltic.

1858, 1st June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“LAUNCH.** — *On Friday last, **Mr Watson** launched a fine schooner from his building-yard here, for Mr Calder of Findhorn. The tides were low, yet the vessel went off beautifully. A large number of spectators congregated to see the new denizen of the deep set afloat, and the usual rounds of cheering were given with great enthusiasm. The ceremony of christening was performed by Miss Watson, daughter of the builder, the name given being **“The Lady Gordon Cumming.”** A number of friends dined with Mr Calder in the afternoon — Captain McDonald in the chair, and the workmen hail a merry ball in the evening. The new schooner, which measures 120 new new tons, and 189 old, and the frame-work of which almost wholly of oak, classes A1 at Lloyd’s for seven years, and is allowed to be an excellent model, worthy of **Mr Watson’s** well-established reputation as a builder. A good proof of the character of his vessels is to be found in the fact that this is the third vessel in succession which Mr Calder has ordered from him.”*

Vessel Name(s)	The Lady Gordon Cumming.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	28 th May 1858.
Owner(s)	Mr James Calder, Findhorn.
Registered Port	Inverness. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	120 tons N.N.M. 189 tons O.M.
Length	90 feet (27.43m).
Breadth	22 feet (6.71m).
Depth	11 feet, 1 inch (3.38m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction, mostly British, Baltic and American oak, and decks of yellow pine.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	1858: Master – John Wright. 1864: Owned by J. Simpson, master Ironside.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1865, 18th October: On passage from Stettin (Prussia) to Leith with a cargo of wheat, she stranded at Old Hellisand, approx. 12 miles east of Christiansand (Norway) and became a total wreck. All hands were saved. Master Captain Ironside. (Registered at Banff).

Perseverance (1860).

She was built speculatively and appears to have taken many months to find herself an owner. She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Banff, Glasgow; Marseilles (France) and the Baltic.



Advertisement of vessel for sale Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 23rd August 1859.

1860, 28th February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“Ship for Sale the Port of Banff. Upon Friday the 9th day of March next, there will be Sold, by Public Roup, within the FIFE ARMS HOTEL, Banff, at One o'clock afternoon. A VESSEL on the Stocks, and ready for launching, built under special survey, to class 7 years A1 at Lloyds. Measures 96 feet Keel, 100 feet on Deck, 24 feet Beam, and depth of Hold, 13 feet 4 inches. Registered tonnage, 126 N.N M. and 270 O.M. The Vessel is built of the very best materials. Copper-fastened to the Walls. Half-poop, expected to sail fast, and will carry about 360 tons dead weight. Further particulars may be learned on application to the Builder, John Watson, in whose hands will be seen an Inventory of the Ship and stores. The Vessel can either be had with Hull and Spars, or Rigged ready for sea.*

GEO. REBURN. Auctioneer.

Banff, 29th February 1860.”

1860, 10th April: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“BANFF - LAUNCH.** - *A fine vessel, in the construction of which Mr Watson, builder, Banff, has been engaged for sometime, was launched from his building-yard on Saturday last. There was an excellent tide, and the ship, the largest Mr Watson has ever built upon the stocks, went off beautifully. Its majestic sweep into the basin was seen to the highest advantage by a large concourse of spectators, between whom and the carpenters and others on deck, the interchange of cheering was most enthusiastic. Miss Adam, daughter of Provost Adam, had the honour of christening the vessel. The name is 'Perseverance' and the vessel is to be, we learn, the 'Perseverance' of Aberdeen, that being the port the ship is to hail from. It was*

Perseverance (1860). (Continued).

bought by Mr John Adam, broker, Aberdeen (son of Provost Adam, Banff), for a company of owners partly in Aberdeen and partly in Banff, at a cost, we believe, of £2,300. The ship is nearly completed. It will be ready for sea, it is expected, by the 1st of May, and is to proceed at once to Archangel. The registered tonnage is 196 N.N.M. and 270 O.M., and it is expected that the vessel will carry 360 tons dead weight. The ship, when once afloat, was scanned with the greatest minuteness; and as to its appearance on the water, the unanimous verdict was, that it looked excellent - that it was quite a model in shape, and was Mr Watson's greatest success yet, in naval architecture."

Vessel Name(s)	Perseverance.
Rig	Brig, 2 masts, 1 deck, a half poop deck, probably a square stern, and a running bowsprit.
Launch Date	7 th April 1860.
Owner(s)	John Adam , broker, Aberdeen.
Registered Port	Aberdeen. Official No.: unknown.
GRT	196 tons. N.N.M. 270 tons O.M. 360 tons deadweight.
Length	100 feet (30.48m). (96 feet (29.26m) at the keel).
Breadth	24 feet (7.32m).
Depth	13 feet, 4 inches (4.06m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Larch, English and Baltic oak. Yellow and red pine.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. ✠ Built under Special Survey. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	Build cost - £2,300 (£286,000 in 2020). Master: A. Beattie.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1867: Reported sank in the White Sea (NW Russia) (John o' Groat Journal, 18 th July 1867). Her crew was reported as saved (Dundee Advertiser, 1 st July 1867).

1867, 3rd July: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported on a shipping disaster in the White Sea, caused by masses of ice being carried down the Dwina and other rivers. Among the long list of casualties of possibly as much as one hundred vessels in the ice, was the brig '**Perseverance**' (194 tons) of Aberdeen, owned by Messrs J. B. Adam & Co., Marischal Street, master – Captain Findlay. Two steamers were despatched to the relief of the shipwrecked crews, both carrying provisions etc. for 500 men for one month each.

Brick (1860).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo and is described in Lloyds Register as a Banff Coaster. She carried coal to Blackpots Harbour, Whitehills to the tile and brick works, hence the name.

1860, 4th December: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF. — On Tuesday last, there was launched from the building yard of Mr John Watson, a fine clipper smack of 37 tons register, and which will class 7 years A1 at Lloyds. The vessel is named the 'Brick.' Her length is 56 feet keel; breadth of beam, 16 feet; depth of hold, 7 feet. She is expected to carry 70 tons 'dead weight,' and is intended to trade between Dunbar and London, during the winter: and carrying coals for Blackpots and Culloden tile-works during the summer. She is owned by Mr Wm. Brodie, brick and tile-maker. A considerable number of people collected to witness the launch of the vessel, which is no less creditable to the builder, than it promises to be remunerative to the owner. The vessel is commanded by Captain Sheils.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Brick.
Rig	Smack, 1 mast, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a running bowsprit.
Launch Date	27 th November 1860.
Owner(s)	Mr William Brodie , brick and tile-maker, Dunbar.
Registered Port	Leith. Official No.: 28754.
GRT	37 tons.
Length	60.5 feet (18.44m). (56 feet (17.07m) at the keel).
Breadth	15.5 feet (4.72m).
Depth	7.1 feet (2.16m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	Master - Captain Sheils. 1865: Master A. Wilson. 1865, 17th March: LRS survey report gives her rig as a schooner.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

The Lily (1860).

Most of the vessels built by **John Watson** were schooners built to carry general cargo, but it's good to see that he built the yacht '**The Lily**' for pleasure sailing.

1860, 12th June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: ***"BANFF – LAUNCH OF CAPTAIN McDONALD'S YACHT. – The yacht which, as we lately noticed, Mr Watson shipbuilder here, has been for some time constructing for Captain McDonald, R.N., Commander of the Coast Guard, was launched yesterday. It has been built on the slip, and now, when finished (except the fitting up of the interior) looks a remarkably tidy little craft. Yesterday, it was very gay, displaying from its smart rigging no less than two full sets of navy signals, a show of colours such as has seldom, if ever been unfurled in Banff harbour. The ceremony of christening was performed by miss Clara Woodham, daughter of Lieutenant Woodham R.N. of the Coast Guard, and immediately after, Captain McDonald entertained all in the wood-yard to a flowing round of champagne, in which success to 'The Lily' was heartily drunk. The cradle of the slip, with the neat clipper-schooner upon it, was then let down into the harbour, amid the cheers of a great number of spectators, and the firing of cannon, the Volunteer Artillerymen discharging a round of their big guns in honour of the gallant captain, who has been very friendly to them in facilitating arrangements for their obtaining the use of the battery. The vessel was put down at low water, in order that it might float when the tide rose. It is to go to sea immediately in order to prove that it does not leak, and then to be fitted up inside, and fully finished. Builder's measurement makes it some ten or eleven tons burthen."***

Vessel Name(s)	The Lily.
Rig	Yacht.
Launch Date	11 th June 1860.
Owner(s)	Captain McDonald.
Registered Port	N/A. Official No.: N/A.
GRT	10 / 11 tons builder's measurement.
Length	Unknown.
Breadth	Unknown.
Depth	Unknown.
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	N/A.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Isa (1861).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and is known to have traded at Banff, Findhorn, Inverness, Montrose, Newcastle, Sunderland, Charlestown, Runcorn, Wemyss and to the Baltic.

1861, 2nd July: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — *On Tuesday last, there was launched from the building-yard of Mr John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff, a fine schooner of 86 tons, ‘new’ measurement. The weather being pleasant, there was a great concourse of spectators, who were much interested in the various preliminary arrangements — the driving of the wedges, the removing of the shores, the arrangement of the check-rope, etc. As the various props were removed, and the vessel lay poised in a position showing a disposition to vibrate at the slightest force, the interest increased in intensity, and burst forth in a shout as the rope was cut, and the huge frame throbbed in its newborn freedom, and Mr Watson’s youngest daughter, Miss Rachael, advancing, greeted the bows of the receding vessel with the customary vinous oblation, at the same time declaring that the craft shall bear the name of ‘Isa.’ The shouts multiplied as the vessel sped down the ways, and gracefully dipped into the tide — three cheers welcoming her advent to an element on which, we fervently hope, she may be profitable to her owner as her style and workmanship are creditable to the taste and skill of her builder. The owner is the enterprising merchant, Mr James Calder, Forres, who has on several former occasions purchased Watson’s handicraft, and whose frequent return argues satisfaction with former investments. We hope soon to see him back again.”*

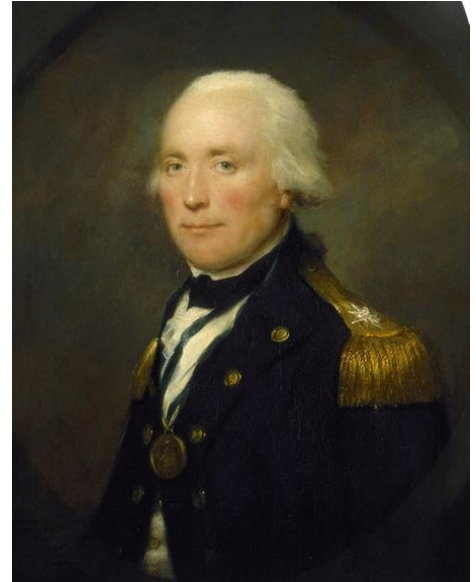
Isa (1861). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Isa.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	25 th June 1861.
Owner(s)	Mr James Calder, Forres.
Registered Port	Findhorn. Official No.: 29229.
GRT	86 tons N.M.
Length	76 feet (23.16m).
Breadth	20 feet (6.10m).
Depth	10.2 feet (3.11m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. British oak, larch and red pine. Yellow pine decks.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis. Part Iron Bolts.
Other information	1861 / c1865: Master Robert Storm. c1867: Owned by George Barron, Nairn. 1874: Owned by George Barron, and Master – A Chisholm, registered at Inverness. By 1889: Owned by Hugh Williams Moelfre, Anglesea, Wales, and registered at Inverness.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1889, 22nd December: She was wrecked when she went ashore on Dulas Rocks, Amlwch on passage from Charleston for Runcorn, with a cargo of China clay, master Williams. All hands were saved.

Sir Robert Calder (1862).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Banff, Findhorn, Aberdeen, and the Baltic. She was named after Admiral Sir Robert Calder (1745 to 1818), he was born in Elgin. In the British navy he had a distinguished career and served in the Seven Years' War, the American Revolutionary War, the French Revolutionary Wars and the Napoleonic Wars.

1862, 14th October: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — *On Thursday last, there was launched from the stocks in the building yard of Mr Watson, shipbuilder here, a very handsome clipper-built three-masted schooner, named 'Sir Robert Calder,' after the well-known Vice-Admiral of the White, Sir Robert Calder, a native of Elgin, and who in life size and full uniform is represented by the figurehead of this vessel. This schooner is built of the very best materials, and measures — Keel, 92 feet; depth of hold, 11 feet 4 inches; breadth of beam, 23 feet 8 inches; tonnage, 160 N.M., or 246 Old, and will carry 300 tons. She has been built for Mr Calder, shipowner, Findhorn, and reflects great credit on the builder, Mr Watson. She is to be commanded by Captain John Wright, late of the 'Lady Gordon Cumming.'* The ceremony of christening was gracefully performed by Mrs Wright, the captain's lady, and the vessel left the slip and dashed into her future element in first-rate style amid the cheers and best wishes for her future success of a large multitude of people who had assembled to see the launch. The owner, Mr Calder, Captain Wright, Mr Watson, the Lloyd's Agent, and a few other gentlemen dined together after the launch, drank success to the **'Sir Robert Calder,'** and spent a very agreeable afternoon. **'Sir Robert Calder'** is intended for the Baltic trade, and so highly has her build and workmanship been approved of, that we understand Mr Watson is about to lay another keel 10 feet longer for one of these three-masters for Mr Adam, Aberdeen.”



Admiral Sir Robert Calder (1745 to 1818) by Lemuel Francis Abbott.

1862, 15th October: The Forres Elgin and Nairn Gazette, Northern Review and Advertiser reported as follows: “...At one o'clock, Mrs Wright, the captain's wife, took her place ready to perform the usual ceremony of christening, as it is technically called. At last, all being in readiness, the ropes were cut, and the "good ship" slid gracefully into the water, amid hearty cheers of the surrounding spectators. A pleasing peculiarity in this launch was the quiet manner in which it was gone about. There was an entire absence of alcoholic drinks—a new feature which cannot on such occasions be too highly commended...”

Sir Robert Calder (1862). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Sir Robert Calder.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	9 th October 1862.
Owner(s)	James Calder , Fyfe Place, Forres, Morayshire.
Registered Port	Findhorn. Official No.: Unknown.
GRT	160 tons N.M. (246 tons O/M.).
Length	92 feet (28.04m).
Breadth	23 feet, 8 inches (7.21m).
Depth	11 feet, 4 inches (3.45m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Darnaway oak (British), Baltic oak, elm, larch, red pine & yellow pine.
Figurehead	Full size figure depicting Sir Robert Calder in full uniform.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 8A1. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	1862: Master – John Wright.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1867, 16th April: The Dundee Courier reported as follows: “ A FINDHORN SCHOONER MISSING – Advices from Londonderry, dated 11 th April state that the three-masted schooner ‘ Sir Robert Calder ’, Captain Wright, of Findhorn, which sailed from Queenstown for that port on the 12 th ult. had not since been heard of.”

Earl of Fife (1863).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Archangel and the Mediterranean. She was probably named after James Duff, 5th Earl Fife (1814 to 1879) who resided at Duff House, Banff and was the Earl Fife at the time.

1863, 21st April: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: ***“LAUNCH - There was launched at Banff, upon Saturday last, from the building-yard of Mr John Watson, a fine three-masted clipper schooner, of 300 tons builders’ measurement, and 232 new measurement. There was a great crowd of onlookers, and everything being duly arranged, at a given signal, the ceremony of ‘christening’ was duly performed by Miss Margaret Adam, the youngest daughter of the owner, who named the vessel the ‘Earl of Fife.’ The ‘Earl of Fife’ is of large frame, classed for seven years, and is in every way a handsome vessel, doing great credit to the builder, Mr Watson, and giving indeed such satisfaction to Mr Adam that he has just arranged with Mr Watson for laying down another vessel of the same model and size, the wood for which already lies alongside the building-yard. The ‘Earl of Fife’ is to be commanded Capt. Angus, late of the ‘Eident,’ also one of Mr Adam’s vessels.”***

Vessel Name(s)	Earl of Fife.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	18 th April 1863.
Owner(s)	Thomas Adam , Aberdeen and Captain Alexander Angus of Stonehaven.
Registered Port	Aberdeen. Official No.: 45211.
GRT	232 tons N.M. (300 tons builder’s measurement).
Length	112 feet (34.14m).
Breadth	25 feet (7.62m).
Depth	14 feet (4.27m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Wood is said to have come from the Hill of Montcoffer, perhaps larch as stated on the LRS survey report which also states Baltic oak, elm, red and yellow pine. 1865: Her hull was sheathed in felt and yellow metal.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. ✠ Built under Special Survey. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	----
Date Scrapped / Lost	1867, 17th June: She was lost with other many other British vessels, after being beset in the ice in northern Russia approximately 12 miles from Sosnovet Island on the Western shore of the White Sea. All hands were saved. Fifty vessels were lost of which 18 were British. The steamers ‘Montezuma’ and ‘Baenda’ were chartered by the British Government to rescue the 131 survivors.

Deveronside (1864).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Leith, Shields, Newcastle, Liverpool, Lowestoft, London, Falmouth, Portland, Waterford, Gravesend, Gibraltar, Genoa (Italy), Venice (Italy), Naples (Italy), Tunis (Italy), Licata (Italy), Palermo (Italy), Leghorn (Italy), Alexandria (Egypt), Girgenti (Italy), Odessa (Ukraine), New York (USA), Philadelphia (USA), Vadsoe (Norway), Cronstadt (Russia), Riga (Russia, now Latvia), and Archangel (Russia), she was seldom seen at Banff.

1864, 16th February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: ***"ADDITION TO BANFF TONNAGE.** — On Tuesday last, there was launched from the building yard of **Mr Watson** a fine three-masted schooner. The vessel is named the **'Deveronside,'** and the ceremony of naming the vessel was very tastefully performed Mrs Dr Clayton, daughter of Provost Adam, the principal owner. The **'Deveronside'** is a vessel of 320 tons O.M., and 235 tons N.M., and does infinite credit to the skill and workmanship of her builder. She is to be commanded by Captain Mutch, and is designed for the Baltic and Mediterranean trades."*

Vessel Name(s)	Deveronside.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	9 th February 1864.
Owner(s)	Provost Thomas Adam (principal owner).
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: Unknown.
GRT	235 tons.
Length	109 feet (33.22m).
Breadth	25 feet (7.62m).
Depth	14 feet (4.27m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Scotch fir, and red pine. Decks - yellow pine. Her hull was sheathed in felt and yellow metal.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 5A1. Part Iron Bolts. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	Master: Captain John Mutch of Newburgh. 1868: At the Yarmouth Roads the ship 'Cumberland' (926 tons) chains parted in strong winds and collided with the 'Deveronside' . 1868 / 1869: Master – Mutch.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

1864, 10th December: The Aberdeen People's Journal reported as follows: *"The schooner **'Deveronside'**, of Banff, Captain Mutch, has been upon the Shipwash Sands at Lowestoft. The*

vessel floated off, but, as she was making some water, she was towed into Lowestoft harbour. The cargo is being discharged, in order to have the vessel put up the slip for necessary repairs.”

Matilda Calder (1864).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at the Baltic.


1864, 6th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“LAUNCH. — On Thursday last, there was launched from the building-yard of **Mr John Watson**, Banff, a three-masted schooner of 160 tons, measuring upon deck 106 feet; length of keel; breadth of beam, 23 feet 8 inches; depth of hold, 11 feet 7 inches, named '**Matilda Calder**,' and classed 7 years A1 at Lloyds. The ceremony of christening was performed by Miss Calder, eldest daughter of the owner, James Calder, Findhorn. She is commanded by Captain Mason, and is for the Baltic trade.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Matilda Calder.
Rig	Schooner, probably 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1 st September 1864.
Owner(s)	James Calder , Forres, Morayshire.
Registered Port	Inverness. Official No.: 48607.
GRT	160 tons.
Length	106 feet (32.31m).
Breadth	23 feet, 8 inches (7.21m).
Depth	11 feet, 7 inches (3.53m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. English oak, larch, Baltic oak, and red pine. Decks of yellow pine.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class: 7A1. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	By 1880: Owned by John A. Johnson, Whitstable, Kent. By 1890: Owned by George H. Gann, Whitstable, Kent. By 1900: Owned by the Whitstable Salvage Co., Limited, No. 2 New London Street, London.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1909: Register closed, fate unknown.

Olivia (1865).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo.

1865, 7th March: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“Launch — On Tuesday, a handsome clipper-schooner was launched from the yard of **Mr Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff. The vessel, which is named the ‘**Olivia**,’ is classed A1 at Lloyds for seven years, and is of the following dimensions: Length of keel, 68 feet; length of beam, 20 feet; and depth of hold, 9½ feet. The ‘**Olivia**’ is the property of Provost Cruickshank, Macduff, whose lady the ceremony of christening the vessel was very gracefully performed. **Mr Watson** has, we believe, in the berth vacated by the ‘**Olivia**,’ laid the keel of a three-masted schooner, for Mr Calder, Findhorn. This is the seventh vessel which **Mr Watson** has laid down for Calder.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Olivia.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	30 th April 1865.
Owner(s)	Provost Cruickshank , Macduff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 69894.
GRT	80 tons.
Length	74 feet (22.56m). 68 feet (20.73m) at her keel.
Breadth	20 feet (5.10m).
Depth	9 feet, 6 inches (2.90m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1.  Built under Special Survey. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. LR Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	1865: Owned by Cruickshank, described in LRS as a Banff Coaster. 1869: Owned by J. Mow. 1872: Owned by Alex. Robertson.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Isabella (1865). (Continued).

1879, 24th November: Lloyd's List reported as follows: "GRANTON, Nov. 21. – 'ISABELLA' – 'AUKATHOR'. – In the collision between these vessels the 'Isabella', of Banff, Walker, from Banff for Sunderland (in ballast), lost jibboom, cutwater, figurehead, anchor and 75 fathoms chain, and sustained other considerable damage."



Banff Harbour with Patent Slip in the foreground c1900. (Photographer unknown).

Note the barrels of salt herring on the Old North Quay and on McDonald's Jetty (East Quay) ready for export, many of which at this period were transported to the Baltic.

Possibly a farlan on the central quay where the herring would have been gutted.

*Three off 2-masted schooners berthed at the Lighthouse Quay and one at McDonald's Jetty, similar to those built at Banff by **John Watson**.*

Several small herring sailboats berthed.

Fairwind (1866).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded Wallsend and at the Baltic.


1866, 6th March: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — On Saturday forenoon, a beautiful clipper schooner was launched from the shipbuilding yard of **John Watson**, Banff. The vessel is named **'Fairwind'** and is 96 tons N.N.M. The dimensions are - length of keel, 80 feet; beam, 21½ feet; depth of hold, 10 feet. The **'Fairwind'** is considered one of the finest models that ever was launched at Banff. She has a regular clipper bow, and is in every respect a handsomely finished ship. Besides being a fast sailor, she will carry a large cargo for her size. The ceremony of naming the vessel was performed by Mrs Storm, wife of the captain, and the **'Fairwind'** took the water in beautiful style. **Mr Watson**, the builder, and others in Banff are the proprietors of the vessel, which will be commanded by Captain Storm, late of the **'James'** of Lossiemouth, and be engaged principally in the Baltic trade.”

Vessel Name(s)	Fairwind.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	3 rd March 1866.
Owner(s)	Alexander Watson , Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: Unknown.
GRT	96 tons.
Length	98.3 feet (29.96m). (80 feet (24.38m) at her keel).
Breadth	23.6 feet (7.19m).
Depth	11.1 feet (3.38m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Scotch fir, spruce, Baltic oak, elm, and red pine.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 5A1. LRS Surveyor: William Wallis. A&CP: anchors and cables proved at a public machine. I.B.: Iron bolts.
Other information	1868: Master R. Storm. (LRS). 1875, 1st January: The Dundee Courier reported that the 'Fairwind' (96 tons) of Cullen was now registered at Arbroath. 1877: Master - Allan. 1878: Master – Cartwright.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.

Fairwind (1866). (Continued).

SHIPS FOR SALE.

Upon **WEDNESDAY** the 17th day of February current, there will be Sold, by Public Roup, within the **TOWN-HALL, Macduff,**



ALL and Whole the First-class Clipper **SCHOONER 'FAIRWIND'** of Banff, presently lying in the Harbour of Macduff.

The 'Fairwind' is of the Registered Tonnage of 98 Tons or thereby, is an excellent Sea-going Ship, Sails fast, and shifts without ballast. Her Sails, Masts, Spars, Standing and Running Rigging are of the best materials, and in good order.

There will also be Sold, by Private Bargain, the property of Mr **John Watson**, Shipbuilder, Banff, a **SCHOONER**, ready for **Launching**, at his Shipbuilding Yard, Banff, of about 140 Tons Register, of the First-class.

Further information will be given as to either of the said Vessels by the said **JOHN WATSON**.

Sale to commence at Twelve o'clock Noon.

GEO. REBURN, Auctioneer.

Banff, 1st Feb. 1869.

'Fairwind' FOR SALE advertisement, Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser - Tuesday 9th and 16th February 1869.


Mayflower (1866).

She was built to carry general cargo, intended for the Baltic trade, and is known to have traded at Hull, Maryport, St Johns (Newfoundland), Cadiz (Portugal), Valparaiso (Brazil), and to St Petersburg (Russia), reported as the 24th vessel launched by **John Watson** at Banff Harbour.

1866, 17th April: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: "**LAUNCH.** — A fine three-masted schooner was launched from the building-yard of **Mr Watson**, Banff, on Saturday forenoon in presence of large number of spectators. The schooner is named the '**Mayflower**' and the ceremony of christening was performed by Miss Smith, daughter of the owner and commander — Captain George Smith, Portsoy, late of the '**Jane Smith.**' The '**Mayflower**' seemed at first a little reluctant with the shore, but, once started, she glided down

Mayflower (1866). (Continued).

*gracefully, as the saying is, 'into her future element.' She did so amidst the repeated cheers of the spectators, which was responded to those on board. The dimensions of this handsome schooner are — length of keel, 100 feet; breadth of beam, 23½ feet; depth of hold, 12 feet 8 inches. The builder's measurement is 182 tons, N.N.M., and the vessel, it is calculated, will carry about 360 tons of cargo. The 'Mayflower' is intended to be employed in the foreign trade. She is of very strong build, of smart outline, and when fairly finished, will have a very fine appearance. This, we believe, is now about the 24th vessel that **Mr Watson** has launched from the same yard, in the course of his shipbuilding career, which has extended over a period of some 17 years. The 'Mayflower' is the third within the past twelvemonth; he has another getting into frame; and it is to be hoped he will go on increasing. We observe also that there are two vessels far advanced in **Mr Geddie's** building-yard, and one of them is expected to be ready for launching some time next month, so that, altogether, Banff is doing a considerable business in the shipbuilding line."*

Vessel Name(s)	Mayflower.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	14 th April 1866.
Owner(s)	Captain George Smith , Portsoy.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 51327.
GRT	182 tons. NM.
Length	100 feet (30.48m).
Breadth	23 feet, 6 inches (7.16m).
Depth	12 feet, 8 inches (3.89m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Her hull was copper fastened.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 8A1.  Built under Special Survey. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine.
Other information	1869, 7th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: "...The ' Mayflower ', it will be remembered, was launched at Banff two years ago, and has proved a very fast sailer...."
Date Scrapped / Lost	1875, 4th October: On passage from Cronstadt (St Petersburg, Russia) to Elsinore (now Helsingborg, Denmark) she stranded on Hoegland (aka Gogland) Island, Gulf of Finland, the Baltic, and became a total loss.

Paragon (1866).

She was built to carry general cargo to trade with the Baltic.

1866, 17th July: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF. — A very handsome clipper schooner was launched from the building-yard of Mr Watson, at Banff Harbour, on Wednesday last. The schooner, named the 'Paragon,' was built to order by Mr Bremner, Wick. The 'Paragon' is 99 tons register, and measures 78 feet of keel. Her length of beam is 21½ feet; depth of hold 10 feet. The vessel is a very neat model, and substantially framed. Both for appearance and workmanship, the 'Paragon' was favourably commented upon by practical gentlemen who inspected her on Wednesday, which must be gratifying to Mr Watson, as it is creditable to the port of Banff. At the launch, Miss Bruce, daughter of the Provost of Wick, performed the ceremony of naming the vessel. The 'Paragon' glided smoothly into the water, an immense crowd of spectators cheering loudly. After the launch, Mr Watson, the builder, entertained a number of ladies and gentlemen to wine and cake, when success to the 'Paragon' was heartily toasted. We understand the 'Paragon' is to be commanded by Captain Williamson, late of the 'St Fergus' of Wick, and that she will be engaged in the Baltic trade.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Paragon.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	11 th July 1866.
Owner(s)	James Bremner, Wick. (64).
Registered Port	Wick. Official No.: 53150.
GRT	94 tons.
Length	80 feet (24.38m).
Breadth	21.5 feet (6.55m).
Depth	10.2 feet (3.11m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic Oak, Larch, and Red Pine. Larch and Iron knees.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. ✠ Built under Special Survey. Lloyds Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	1870: Owned by Andrew Tarras & others. 1871: Owned by Andrew James. By 1874: Owned by James Blackhall, Fraserburgh and registered at Fraserburgh.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1900, 14th / 15th February: Lost when she went aground on the sands at Rattray Head. See below for more information.

Paragon (1866). (Continued).

1900, 28th February: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: *“MACDUFF VESSEL SUPPOSED LOST. Great anxiety is felt for the safety of the ‘Paragon’, of Macduff. She carried three of a crew, and was on a voyage from Shields, leaving on the same day as the ‘Lothair’, which, it is also feared, is lost. A piece of wreckage was picked up half a mile east of Cullen by Mr James Runcie, harbourmaster, with the letters “GON,” in blue. There has also been picked up on the beach at Sandend, by Mr Alexander Sutherland, a piece of a nameboard with the letters “PARA,” being the missing half of the above board. There is therefore no doubt it belongs to the ‘Paragon’, of Macduff. The ‘Paragon’ was built in 1873, and of 36 tons burden.”*

1900, 27th February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“APPEAL TO THE INHABITANTS OF BANFF AND MACDUFF. By the loss, with all hands, of the Vessels “Emperor” and “Lothair” of Banff, and “Paragon” of Macduff, in the severe storm of 14th and 15th inst., Fourteen Seamen belonging to the two towns were drowned, and 8 Widows, 36 Orphans and 3 aged Dependents have been left practically unprovided for: and it is feared these numbers may be further increased by losses from other Vessels not yet accounted for. In these deplorable circumstances we have opened subscription lists and earnestly appeal for pecuniary aid in alleviating the immediate necessities of the unfortunate sufferers thus unexpectedly bereft of bread-winners. Subscriptions will be received in Banff by George Shearer, Town Chamberlain; and in Macduff by Mr J. J. George, Town Clerk, who will acknowledge same in the Banffshire Journal.”* Signed: Henry Munro, Provost of Banff and Joseph Bisset, Provost of Macduff, dated 23rd February 1900. This was followed by a long list of donations from local individuals.

1900, 3rd March: The Aberdeen People’s Journal reported as follows: *“SHIPWRECKED MARINERS’ SOCIETY AND THE LOST SAILORS. – Captain Wilson, harbour master, who is local agent for the Shipwrecked Mariners’ Society, brought under the notice of the Society the cases of the Macduff men who were on board the ‘Emperor’ and the ‘Paragon’. The only man in the Society was Charles Abel (‘Emperor’), whose widow and family receive £6. On Captain Wilson’s recommendation the Society has, however, kindly agreed to grant to the widow and family of Alexander Gordon (Paragon) £2 15s; to the widow of George Henderson (Emperor), £2; and to the widow and family of John Kynoch (Paragon), £3.”*



Extract from the Lloyds Survey Report re her build, dated 16th July 1866, “A1 for 7 years” and “A+CP”, which can be found on www.lrfoundation.org.uk

Jane Simpson (1867).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo and intended for use in the Baltic. Unfortunately, she ran aground near Rotterdam and was lost at only 6-months old.

The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 4th June 1867, reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** – Yesterday (Monday), a very superior clipper schooner was launched from the building-yard of **Mr Watson** at Banff Harbour. The vessel is named **‘Jane Simpson’**, after the wife of one of the owners, Mr Simpson, Colleonard. The dimensions of the ship are – Length of keel, 77 feet; breadth, 21 feet 6 inches; and depth of hold, 10 feet. The registered tonnage is 94 tons. At the launch, there was a large concourse of spectators. The ceremony of christening was performed by Miss Agnes Simpson, and the vessel glided smoothly into the water, amid the cheers of the onlookers. After the launch, a party of gentlemen were entertained to a wine and cake banquet, when success to the vessel, and the health of the owners and builder were toasted to. The **‘Jane Simpson’** is the property of gentlemen in Banff; the managing owner being John W. Simpson. The ship will be employed in the Baltic and coasting trade, and will be commanded by Captain Adams, late of the **‘Eliza’**. It has been generally remarked that this is one of the best modelled and finely finished ships that have been built at the port of Banff. We understand that Mr Watson is to lay the keels of two vessels immediately – one of about 80 tons for Messrs John Allan & Son, Portsoy, and the other, of about 180 tons, for Mr Calder, Forres, and some gentlemen in Banff.”

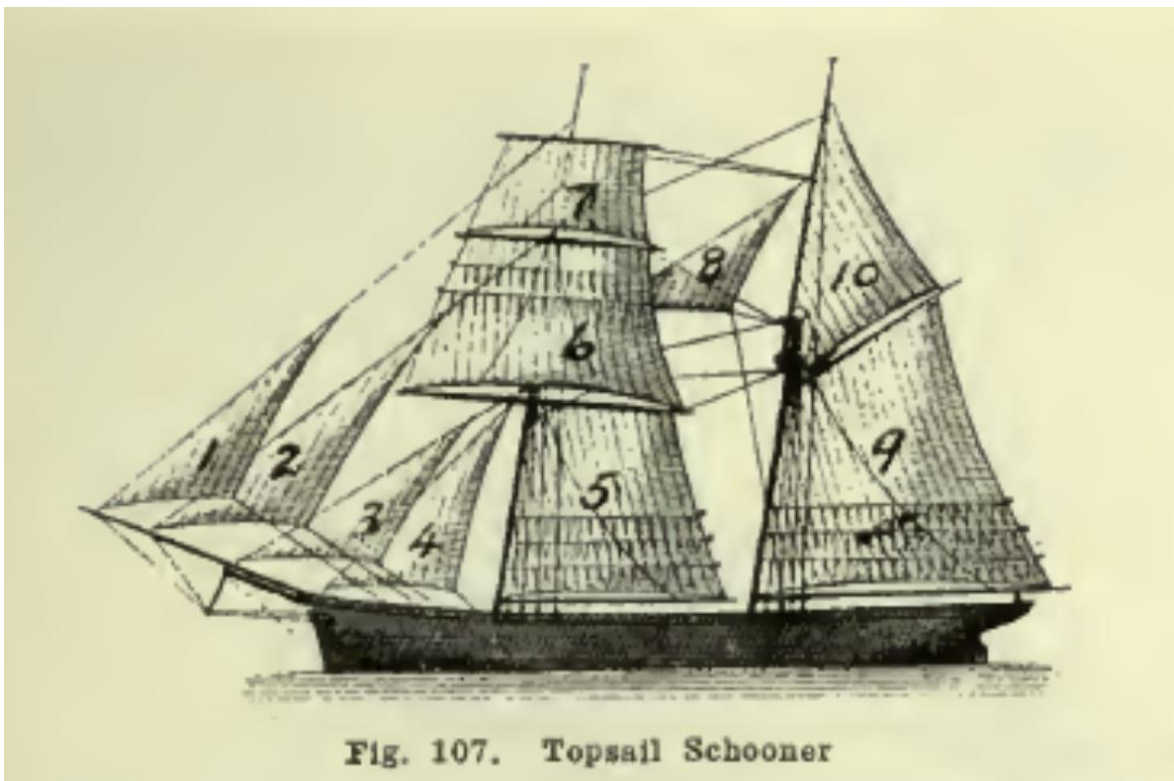
Vessel Name(s)	Jane Simpson.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	3 rd June 1867.
Owner(s)	John W. Simpson & Co., Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: Unknown.
GRT	94 tons.
Length	80 feet (23.47m). (77 feet length of keel).
Breadth	21 feet, 6 inches (6.55m).
Depth	11 feet, 3 inches (3.43m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic Oak, Larch, and Red Pine. Iron knees. 2 bower anchors, 1 stream and 1 kedge.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. A&CP: anchors and cables proved at a public machine. ✠ Built under Special Survey. Lloyds Surveyor William Wallis.

Jane Simpson (1867). (Continued).

Other information	Master: G. Adams.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1867, 10th December: on passage from Schiedam (Netherlands) to Stettin (Prussia) she was wrecked near Rotterdam when she ran on a dangerous sand bank. All hands were saved.

1867, 20th December: The Daily Review (Edinburgh) reported as follows: **“LEITH - SHIPPING NOTES.** – The screw steamer ‘**Osborne**’, of Leith, arrived on Wednesday from Rotterdam, with a very large cargo of general merchandise. Five seamen, forming part of the crew of the schooner ‘**Jane Simpson**’ of Banff, which was wrecked near Rotterdam on the 10th inst., were passengers by the ‘**Osborne**’. The ‘**Jane Simpson**’ was built only about six months ago, and was on a voyage from Schiedam to Stettin when she went upon a dangerous sandbank, from which it was impossible to remove her. The crew saved the rigging and other deck fittings, and their own effects, and the captain remained at Rotterdam to look after the cargo, which was being saved at low water. The crew were provided with board and lodgings for the night at the Sailors’ Home, and were forwarded to Banff by Mr D. R. Macgregor, the agent of the Shipwrecked Mariners’ Society at Leith.”

A Lloyds Survey Report with more information on her build dated 8th June 1867 can be found on www.lrfoundation.org.uk



Typical Topsail Schooner rig. (Wooden ship-building by C. Desmond - 1919).

Maggie (1867).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Wick, Banff and the Baltic.

1867, 28th February: The John o' Groat Journal reported as follows: "**LAUNCH AT BANFF. – ADDITION TO THE TONNAGE OF WICK.** – On Thursday forenoon, **Mr John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff, launched from his yard a very handsome schooner, which regards model, materials, and workmanship, is well calculated to sustain the deservedly high fame which he has established for himself as a builder. A ship launch is at all times an event of exciting importance to all classes of the community, and the weather being fine, there was an unusually large turn out of spectators to witness the interesting ceremony, and as the numerous vessels now in the harbour all displayed their bunting in order to welcome the newcomer, the scene at the harbour had quite an animated appearance. The launch was appointed to take place between twelve and one o'clock, and all being in readiness, the lashings were cut, and as the gallant ship slid smoothly down the ways, she was gracefully named the '**Maggie**', by Mrs Kemp, wife of Captain Kemp, late of the '**Aurora**', by whom the new vessel is to be commanded. The '**Maggie**', which has been built under contract, (and under the superintendence of Mr William Cormack from Wick) for Mr David Ritchie Simpson, ironmonger, Wick, in size and model much resembles the '**Paragon**', recently built by **Mr Watson** for Wick owners; but her builder thinks that in several particulars she is greatly superior. Her dimensions are as follows: - Length, 81 feet 3 inches, breadth of beam, 21 feet 3 inches, depth of hold 10 feet ½ inches, registered tonnage, 88 86-100ths N.N.M., builder's measurement, about 162 tons. While as regards model, to look at the fine lines of the '**Maggie**' one might almost fancy her fit to enter the lists with the world-famed '**Henrietta**', her outfits will embrace every modern improvement. Her ropes and sails come from Wick, but her standing rigging, which is to consist of the best patent wire-rope, will be supplied by Mr Munro, Banff. Her cabin, which is fitted up with teak and white pine, will afford good accommodation for the captain and mate, while the roominess of her forecastle shows that the crew has not been overlooked, as is too often the case. Like all vessels built by **Mr Watson** she will sail fast, while her breadth of floor will enable her to take a large cargo: and she will thus add to the fame, we doubt not that she will also add to the increasing business of her builder, who is, we understand, immediately to lay down a vessel for Mr John Simpson, Banff. It was thought by some that the other new vessel would have been launched from the yard of **Messrs Geddie** yesterday, but we learn that it will be a week or two before she is altogether ready. – Banffshire Reporter."

Maggie (1867). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Maggie.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	21 st February 1867.
Owner(s)	George and David R. Simpson, Wick.
Registered Port	Wick. Official No.: 56718.
GRT	100 tons.
Length	82 feet (24.99m). 77 feet (23.47m) keel.
Breadth	21 feet, 6 inches (6.55m).
Depth	10 feet, 2 inches (3.10m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic oak, larch, elm, red and yellow pine.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1. ✠ Built under Special Survey. LR Surveyor: William Wallis. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine.
Other information	1867: Master, Kemp. 1882, 25th August: Her owner George Simpson died. 1883, February: Owned by David R. Simpson & John Simpson. 1883, March: Owned by John Findlay of Wick. 1886, 6th January: A schooner of this name was wrecked at Sunderland, master Captain Lyall. 1912, February: Owned by William Murdoch of Nairn.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1913, March: Scrapped.

No.	Ships.	Masters.	Tons.	DIMENSIONS.			BUILD.		Owners.	Port belonging to.	Port of Survey and Destined Voyage.	Classification.	
				Length.	Breadth	Depth.	Where.	When.				No. Years first assigned.	Character for Hull&Stores
51 ✠	Maggie pt.I.B.	Sr Kemp	99	82·0	21·6	10·3	Banff Watson	1867 2mo.	DSimpson	Wick	Bnf.Baltic (A.&C.P.)	7 A	1 3,67

Extract from Lloyd's Register of Shipping 1867.

1886, 9th January: The Shields Daily Gazette reported that a vessel of this names wrecked hull was sold at public auction on the 8th January. The buyer was Mr T. Moore, who paid £20 for her. Her cargo of coal was sold for £15. I could not establish if this was the same vessel refloated or a different vessel.

Lady of the Lake. (1867).

She was built to carry general cargo and known to have traded at Banff, Portsoy, Gardenstown, Inverness, Perth, Leith, Wemyss, Newcastle, Wallsend, Hartlepool, Sunderland, London, and to the West Coast.

John Watson built another vessel with this name in 1878.

1867, 17th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF. — On Saturday forenoon last, **Mr Watson**, shipbuilder, launched from the yard at Banff Harbour, a fine clipper schooner. She is built on the same model as the three last vessels launched by **Mr Watson**, her tonnage being 123 tons O.M., and 75 tons N.N.M. Her length of keel is 70 feet, breadth of beam 19½ feet, and depth of hold 9½ feet. This craft is very substantially built, the lower section being of oak and the upper of fine larch. She has been classed A1 at Lloyd’s for seven years. The vessel was built to the order of Messrs Allan & Son, merchants, Portsoy. At the launch Mrs Alex. Allan performed the ceremony of christening, naming the vessel the '**Lady of the Lake**'. The launch was very successful, and was witnessed by a large number of spectators. After the launch, a number of gentlemen sat down to cake and wine in St John's Mason Hall. Mr Marshall of the Customs presided, and the health of the owners and builders, and success to the '**Lady of the Lake**' will be under the command of Captain Alex. McDougall, late of the '**Admiral**'. We are glad to observe that **Mr Watson** has laid the keel of another vessel, a three-masted schooner of 200 tons, for Mr Calder, Forres.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Lady of the Lake.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	14 th September 1867.
Owner(s)	Messrs John Allan & Son , merchants, Portsoy.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 58264.
GRT	123 tons. OM, 75 tons NM.
Length	70 feet (21.34m).
Breadth	19 feet, 6 inches (5.94m).
Depth	9 feet, 6 inches (2.90m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1.
Other information	
Date Scrapped / Lost	1880, circa 26th / 27th October: She was lost in a gale on passage from London to Newburgh, Perth, Scotland. See below for Press articles giving further information.

Lady of the Lake (1867). (Continued).

1880, 26th November: The Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette reported as follows: *“LOSS OF A SCHOONER AND FIVE HANDS. The schooner ‘Lady of the Lake’, of Banff, with her crew of five men, has been given up as lost. She left London on the 25th October last for Newburgh, Perth, with manure, and the voyage should have occupied only three or four days. As the vessel has not been heard of since she left London, it is supposed she had been caught in the gale which swept over the coast at the end of October.”*

1880, 26th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“SUPPOSED LOSS OF A BANFF SCHOONER AND CREW. Grave fears are entertained in Banff and the neighbouring ports of Macduff and Portsoy that the schooner ‘Lady the Lake’, of Banff, belonging to Messrs John Allan & Sons, Portsoy, and others, has been lost while on a voyage from London to Newburgh, Perth, with manure. She left London on the 25th day of October and the voyage, with moderate weather, should have only occupied three or four days. The vessel has not been heard of since her departure from London — now a month since — and it is feared she had been caught in the gales which swept our coasts in the end of October and been lost. The crew consisted of four men, with a young lad as an apprentice. The ‘Lady of the Lake’ was under the command of Captain McDougall, Portsoy, and she was comparatively light, being only two-thirds full. Two of the crew belonged to Portsoy. One, David Wilson, was married; the other being the apprentice. Alexander Johnston, who resided with his mother. The other two, named Clerk and Pirie, belonged to Macduff and Banff, respectively, and both leave widows and families. The ‘Lady of the Lake’ was built in 1878 by Mr John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff, and was 86 tons register, with a carrying power of 150 tons. During a voyage in the spring time of this year she was severely damaged off the West Coast of Scotland, but was towed round to Banff, and received a thorough overhaul at a cost of from £800 to £900. The vessel sailed from Banff Harbour on the first day of September with a cargo of herrings for Stettin immediately after being fitted out. The captain spoke very highly of her sailing capacities since that time. Much sympathy is expressed for the sufferers by the disaster. The captain was widely known in the district as a man of activity, intelligence, and large experience, having for years commanded vessels sailing from the port of Banff. We understand he had a considerable stake in the vessel. He leaves a widow to mourn his untimely end. The vessel and cargo were insured.”*

Pioneer (1868).

She was built to carry general cargo and intended to trade with the Baltic.

1868, 26th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: ***“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — A very handsome and finely finished clipper was launched from the building yard of **Mr John Watson** at Banff harbour on Thursday last. The vessel was named the **‘Pioneer’**, and is the property of Mr Georgison, merchant, Wick, and others. Her tonnage is 86 tons register, and she will carry 160 tons of cargo. The dimensions are-length of keel, 74 feet; breadth, 20 feet, and depth of hold 9 feet 6 inches. Registered A1 for seven years, she will trade to the Baltic under the command of Mr Williamson, formerly master of the **‘Paragon’**. At the launch everything went pleasantly. Mrs Williamson performed the ceremony of christening the vessel, which glided smoothly into the harbour, and was soon moored at the quayside. The **‘Pioneer’** is very substantial and neatly modelled specimen of naval architecture. She has an elliptic stern, neatly decorated, and for figurehead a billet with fish, emblematic of the importance of the fishing interest at the port to which she belongs.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Pioneer.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	21 st May 1868.
Owner(s)	Mr Georgison and Co. , merchant, Wick.
Registered Port	Wick. Official No.: 56723.
GRT	86 tons.
Length	74 feet (22.56m).
Breadth	20 feet (6.10m).
Depth	9 feet, 6 inches (2.90m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Billet with fish.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1.
Other information	By 1890: owned by John Smith, Portsoy and registered at Banff. 1891, 2nd March: The Shields Daily Gazette reported as follows: <i>“The schooner ‘Pioneer’, belonging to Banff, which was recently ashore at Boulmar, and brought to the Tyne in a damaged condition, has been placed in Messrs Boutland's graving dock, South Shields, for examination.”</i>
Date Scrapped / Lost	1899, 17th August: On passage from Sunderland to Banff, carrying a cargo of coal, master Captain William Gair, she was wrecked at the mouth of the River Philorth east of Fraserburgh Bay during a gale. The tug ‘Promise’ and the lifeboat rescued the five crew, and the master and his wife. She was owned by captain Smith and was insured. Canmore gives the NGR for the wreck site as NK 028 650.

Pioneer (1868).

1891, 25th February: The Shields Daily News reported as follows: **“ARRIVAL OF A DAMAGED SCHOONER.** – Yesterday, the schooner **‘Pioneer’**, of Banff, which went ashore at Boulmer, while on a voyage from Sunderland to Tain, was brought to the Tyne, damaged, and made fast alongside Salmon’s Quay. Mr Barclay, diver, North Shields, has been engaged to examine the vessel, and ascertain what damage she has sustained.”

1887, 20th September: The Dundee Evening Telegraph reported as follows: **“The following casualties occurred in the river at Sunderland on Sunday...The schooner ‘Pioneer’, of Banff, collided with the barque ‘Vizcaya’, of Ardenal, the former vessel receiving slight damage.”**

PIONEER (schooner), Sunderland to Banff,
wrecked in Fraserburgh Bay, August, 1899.
The Committee of Lloyd's hereby give NOTICE that they have received from their Agent at Fraserburgh, the sum of £3 15s., being proceeds of salvage, ex above.
Any person interested in these salvage proceeds is requested to apply to the Secretary.
Lloyd's, Aug. 30, 1899. **H. HOZINK, Secretary.**

Notice published in Lloyd's List - Thursday 7th September 1899.

Forresian (1868).

She was built to carry general cargo specifically for the Baltic and Mediterranean trade.

1868, 4th March: The Nairnshire Telegraph and General Advertiser for the Northern Counties reported as follows: ***"SHIP LAUNCH.** — A schooner belonging to Mr Calder, Forres, was launched from the building yard of **Mr Watson**, Banff, last Tuesday. Miss Isabella Calder, the second daughter of the owner, performed the ceremony of naming the vessel, which was called **"Forresian."** Her tonnage is about 200 tons. She is classed A1 at Lloyds for nine years, and is intended for the Baltic and Mediterranean trade."*

Vessel Name(s)	Forresian.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a round stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	26 th April 1868.
Owner(s)	J. Calder , Forres, Morayshire.
Registered Port	Inverness. Official No.: 52518.
GRT	193 net tons.
Length	104.6 feet (31.88m).
Breadth	23.7 feet (7.22m).
Depth	12.7 feet (3.87m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	1878, 5th November: She sank after being ran down by a steamer. See Press articles below for further details.

1878, 8th November: The Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail reported as follows: ***"LOSS OF SHIP AND FOUR LIVES.** A Malaga telegram states the **"Forresian,"** Captain Findhorn, from London to Port de Bona, was run down and sank by a Spanish steamer off Cape Bralos, on the 5th inst. Captain Findhorn and three men of the **"Forresian"** were saved; the mate and three men were drowned. The following is a list of the crew of the **"Forresian,"** which was run down: — Findhorn, master; John Wright, mate; Keeitz, cook and steward; Greenson, Soulsby and Gordon, able-bodied seaman; Cotton and Ward, ordinary seamen."*

1878, 9th November: The Northern Whig reported as follows: *"A Lloyd's telegram announces that the **'Forresian'**, of Inverness, from London to Port Bone with pitch, was run down and sunk by the Spanish steamer **'Anatagos'**, off Cape Pralos, on the 5th instant. The master and three hands of the **'Forresian'** were saved, and landed at Malaga; the mate and three others were drowned."*

Forresian (1868). (Continued).

1878, 8th November: The Scotsman reported as follows: *“DISASTERS AT SEA AN INVERNESS SCHOONER AND FOUR MEN LOST. A REPORT has reached Lloyd's by telegraph from their agent at Malaga that a serious collision occurred off Cape Pravos on the night of the 5th inst. between the English schooner ‘Forresian’, belonging to Inverness owned and commanded by Captain Wright and the Spanish steamer ‘Pasages’, whereby the schooner was sunk, and Mr John Wright, the mate, and three others of the crew drowned. The captain and remaining hands were saved, and landed at Malaga. The ‘Forresian’ was bound from London to Port de Bone with a cargo of pitch. The following is supposed to be a correct list of the men shipped on board the ‘Forresian’ for the voyage: — John Wright, master; John Wright mate; John Keeitz, cook and steward; O. Greenson, John P. Soulsby, and Alex. Gordon, all able seamen; Joseph Cotton and W. Ward, both ordinary seamen.”*

1878, 22nd November: The Edinburgh Evening News reported as follows: *“WRECK OF AN ENGLISH VESSEL OFF MALAGA. The Malaga correspondent of a Marseilles paper states that during the night of the 5th inst., an English brig, the ‘Forresian’ was run down off Malaga by a steamer, the ‘Pasajes’, belonging to the Lopez Navigation Company. At one in the morning the pilot of the English brig noticed the lights of a steamer bearing down upon them, and as he found that his shouts did not cause her to alter her course, he hastily called up the captain from below. Before the latter had assembled his crew upon deck, the ‘Pasajes’ struck the English brig with such force that her bow went clean through the latter. The English sailors tried to launch their big boat, but one of the cables stuck fast, and the pilot went below to fetch an axe. While he was below, the brig began to sink; but two of the sailors managed to climb the sides of the ‘Pasajes’, the remainder, including the pilot, going down. The ‘Pasajes’ cruised about for several hours; but all search proving useless, she landed the two survivors at Malaga the next morning.”*

Forward (1869).

She was built speculatively as a general cargo carrier.

The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser - Tuesday 16th February 1869, reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF. — On Saturday last, a clipper schooner was launched from the building-yard of Mr John Watson, at Banff harbour. The vessel measures 140 tons register. Her dimensions are: - length, 95 feet; breadth of beam, 24 feet; and depth of hold, 11 feet. The classification is A1 at Lloyds for seven years. The vessel will carry a large cargo and will be fast sailer. She has been spoken of by practical men who have seen her on the stocks as the finest lined and most substantially built vessel that ever Mr Watson has finished, and we believe he has launched no fewer than thirty vessels at this port. At the launch, the ceremony*

Forward (1869) (Continued).

of christening was performed by Mrs Watson, wife of the builder, who named the vessel 'Forward'. The launch was most successful, and was witnessed by a large concourse of spectators, who cheered lustily as the vessel left the stocks. We understand the 'Forward' is to be commanded by Captain Storm, son-in-law of Mr Watson, and formerly of the 'Fairwind'. After the launch, a number of gentlemen sat down to cake and wine in the loft at the building-yard. Mr Watson, gas manager, proposed prosperity to the 'Forward'. Mr Hossack proposed the health of Mr Watson, builder, remarking that the thanks of the community were due to him for his enterprise, which enabled him to give employment to a large number of workmen: and also for maintaining the character of Banff as a shipbuilding port. Mr Watson suitably replied. Mr Charles Innes gave the health of Mrs Watson, and Mr Watson, gas manager gave the health of Captain Storm. One or two toasts followed, and the party broke up."

Vessel Name(s)	Forward.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	13 th February 1869.
Owner(s)	John Watson , shipbuilder.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62429.
GRT	140 tons.
Length	95 feet (28.96m).
Breadth	24 feet (7.32m).
Depth	11 feet (3.35m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 7A1.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	1869, 31st August: She was wrecked at the island of Stonaker, about 70 miles below St Petersburg, Russia. (See below).

1869, 7th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *"WRECK OF A BANFF SCHOONER. – Intelligence has been received by Messrs Watson, shipbuilders, of the loss of their fine new schooner 'Forward'. The vessel left Grimsby on Wednesday week (25th August) with a cargo of coals for St Petersburg. On Tuesday last, at the island of Stonskar (Seskar), about seventy miles below St Petersburg, the 'Forward' struck the rocks, and soon filled with water. The crew were, fortunately, save, but Captain Storm reports that the ship is a total wreck. The 'Forward' was one of the most completely fitted and fast vessels that sailed from the Moray Firth. She was registered 131 tons; and left Banff on her maiden voyage five months ago. The loss of the vessel is almost wholly covered by insurance."*

Guiding Star (1869).

She was built to carry general cargo.

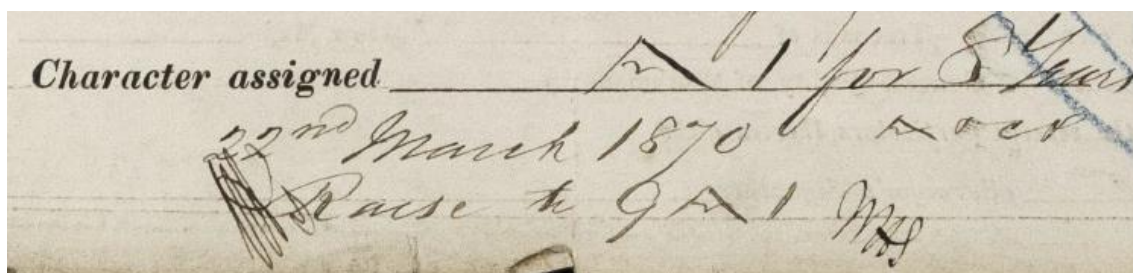
1869, 7th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“WE understand that the fine three-masted clipper schooner now on the stocks at the shipbuilding yard of **Mr Watson**, at Banff Harbour, has been purchased by Captain Smith, Portsoy, for the owners of the ‘**Mayflower**’. The ‘**Mayflower**’, it will be remembered, was launched at Banff two years ago, and has proved a very fast sailor. The new vessel will be launched in about a month.”*

1869, 5th November: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: *“**LAUNCH AT BANFF.** Yesterday another very important addition was made to the shipping of Portsoy, by the launch of a first-class three-masted clipper schooner from the building yard of **Mr John Watson**, Banff, and which we noticed some time since as having been purchased by our townsman, James Smith, of the brig ‘**Eliza Forbes**’. Everything was ready for the launch at the time of the last stream, but the tide did not rise well, and besides, there was some hope that Captain Smith, then on a voyage to the Baltic, might he home to be present, which the very stormy state of the weather has prevented. Yesterday the strong gale from the west gave a good tide, and the launch, which took place a little after eleven o'clock, proved most successful. The ceremony of christening was performed by Mrs Smith, wife of the captain and owner, who was accompanied by a number of her family and friends. As the vessel slipped easily from the ways Mrs Smith named her the ‘**Guiding Star**’, and it is almost needless to say that she was welcomed to her future element by the hearty cheers of a large concourse of spectators, who in spite of the very bad weather had turned out to witness the launch. We have often had occasion to bestow well-merited praise on the handsome and seaworthy vessels built by **Mr Watson**: but we believe it is his own opinion, and it is also the opinion of many others well able to judge, that the ‘**Guiding Star**’ is in every respect the finest vessel of her tonnage which he has yet built. She has very fine lines forward, and her stem is surmounted by an exceedingly neat scroll and billet shield, the centre of which is ornamented with a star, indicative of her name. Her stern is elliptic, and she has a raised quarter deck. This gives her a fine roomy cabin, and a very considerable increase of accommodation. The cabin furnishings are of the best teak and are very elegant. Her dimensions are: — Length upon deck, 120 feet; breadth 25 feet 6 inches; depth, 14 feet. She is built of the best oak and larch, and is coppered and copper fastened In fact we believe that she is the first new vessel which **Mr Watson** has coppered on the stocks. She is 248 tons N.N.M. and classed eight years. Her sails and outfits are being furnished by Mr Munro, rope and sailmaker, Banff; and she will be rigged as a three-masted schooner, with short foremast and double top-sail yards. Altogether the ‘**Guiding Star**’ is a vessel which reflects the highest credit on Mr as her builder, and all heartily wish that*

Guiding Star (1869). (Continued).

she may prove a satisfactory ship to her spirited and enterprising owner. When the launch was over, Mr Watson, as usual on such occasions, invited a few friends to partake of his hospitality in the Draughting Loft, where, under the happy auspices of Mr Watson, gas manager, as chairman, "Success to the 'Guiding Star'," the health's of the builder and owner and other sentiments of respect and mutual esteem were given in appropriate speeches and most cordially responded to. In replying to his health as coupled with the toast of the "Town and Trade of Banff," Mr Watson stated, that he had now for about twenty years been paying at the rate of about £3,000 a year in the shape of wages; and that though he had been pressed to take building yards in other places, he preferred to remain in Banff; and would continue to do so as long as he received sufficient encouragement."

Vessel Name(s)	Guiding Star.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, an elliptic stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	4 th November 1869.
Owner(s)	James Smith, Portsoy.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62435.
GRT	248 tons.
Length	120 feet (36.58m).
Breadth	25 feet, 6 inches (7.77m).
Depth	14 feet (4.27m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic oak, larch and red pine. Her hull was sheathed in felt and yellow metal. Knees – Iron and Larch.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 8A1. (Raised to 9A1 in 1870). A&CP – Anchors and cables proved at a public machine.
Other information	By 1890: Owned by Peter Fancy, Hobart, Tasmania, and registered at Hobart Town.
Date Scrapped / Lost	Unknown.



A Lloyds Register survey report on the build of 'Guiding Star' dated 4th February 1870 can be found on www.lrfoundation.org.uk, this extract shows she was classed 8A1 and raised to class 9A1.

Guiding Star (1869). (Continued).**1888, 3rd January:**

She sailed from the port of Mangonui, New Zealand on passage to Sydney NSW, Australia.

The crew list for this passage showed ten members of crew as follows:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Nationality</i>
<i>J. Skin</i>	<i>Master</i>		<i>Unknown</i>
<i>Joseph Creeve</i>	<i>1st Officer</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>Tasmanian</i>
<i>Louis Williams</i>	<i>Cook & Steward</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>Prussian</i>
<i>Peter Sellholm</i>	<i>Boatswain</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>Finnish</i>
<i>William Emery</i>	<i>A. B.</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>Tasmanian</i>
<i>Francas Franche</i>	<i>A. B.</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>French</i>
<i>Charles Harding</i>	<i>A. B.</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Tasmanian</i>
<i>Thomas Goldring</i>	<i>A. B.</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Tasmanian</i>
<i>John Sullivan</i>	<i>O. S.</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Tasmanian</i>
<i>Thomas McKenna</i>	<i>A. B.</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>Tasmania</i>

The vessel did not carry any passengers on this passage.




Schooner on Banff Harbour Patent Slip. (Photographer unknown).

Tarlair (1870).

She was built as a coaster for general cargo and is known to have traded at the Baltic.

1870, 27th September: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF - On Saturday forenoon last, a clipper schooner was launched from the ship-building yard of Mr John Watson, at Banff harbour. The schooner, named the ‘Tarlair’, measures 90 tons register, and is classed at Lloyd's A1 for nine years. The dimensions are length of keel 73 feet, depth of hold 10 feet, and breadth of beam 21 feet. The ‘Tarlair’ is owned by the Macduff Commercial Company, and will be employed in the business of the Company. She will be under the command of Captain Davidson, formerly of the ‘Tolla’. At the launch, the directors of the Company were present, and a large number of spectators witnessed the proceedings. The ceremony of naming the ship was performed by Miss Bisset, Insch, sister of the Manager of the Commercial Company, and the launch was very successful. In the afternoon, the directors of the Macduff Commercial Company and a few friends dined in Sutherland's Hotel, Macduff, under the presidency of the Chairman, Mr Thompson of Pitmedden.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Tarlair.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	24 th September 1870.
Owner(s)	Commercial Co., Macduff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62446.
GRT	91 tons.
Length	77 feet (23.47m).
Breadth	20.8 feet (6.34m).
Depth	10 feet (3.05m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Her hull was sheathed in copper.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.  Built under Special Survey. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine.
Other information	1870 / 1875: Master D. Davidson. 1875 / 1878: Owned by W. Morrison, Banff, master P. Rettie. 1879 / 1889: Owned by J. S. Wood, Peterhead, master – H. Sangster, later Cruickshank.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1889, 8th May: During a thick fog, she ran ashore at Whaligoe, halfway between Wick and Lybster and became a wreck, her cargo of fish-curing stock was salvaged. See press report below.

Tarlair (1870). (Continued).

1876, 1st February: The London Evening Standard: Reported that the **'Bon Accord'** of Aberdeen had been in a collision with the Schooner **'Tarlair'** of Macduff, off the Bell Rock. Both vessels were reported to be at Aberdeen damaged.

1880, 6th February: The Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette reported that the schooner **'Tarlair'** of Macduff on passage to Sunderland had gone ashore on the Newburgh Sands near the River Ythan. She was expected to be got off if weather kept moderate. Owner J. S. Wood, Peterhead.

1880, 5th February: The Scotsman reported as follows: ***"ABERDEEN. – MACDUFF SCHOONER AGROUND. – About six o'clock on Tuesday night the schooner 'Tarlair', belonging to Macduff, Black master, and bound from that port to Sunderland in ballast, went ashore about two miles north of Newburgh, on the Aberdeenshire coast. The wind was blowing SW, at the time, and a frosty haze was hanging over the sea. The captain was reaching in-shore at the time, and allowed himself to approach too near the shore. Arrangements were made in the course of yesterday for towing off the vessel, which went aground on sandy bottom, and sustained little or no damage. The 'Tarlair' was built in 1870, and belonged to the Macduff Commercial Company. Last night the Aberdeen tug-boat 'Derwent' made an attempt to tow the vessel off, but the attempt proved unsuccessful, on account of the heavy surf and the strong wind. Another attempt is to be made today."***

1880, 24th April: The Aberdeen Press and Journal published a lengthy article of court proceedings on ***"ACTION FOR SALVAGE"*** regarding the grounding of the **'Tarlair'**.

1881, 12th September: Lloyd's List reported that on the 9th September that the steamer **'Hope'** collided with the schooner **'Tarlair'**. Damage to **'Tarlair'** included damage to herrings, her bow, foremast and bowsprit, **'Hope'** suffered very little damage. **'Tarlair'** was towed by the **'Hope'** to the port of Christiansand, Norway.

1884, 6th November: The Dundee Evening Telegraph reported that the schooner **'Tarlair'** of Peterhead, was spoken of approximately 120 miles southeast of Peterhead with her mainmast gone. A tug was sent out to assist her.

1884, 6th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: ***"VESSEL FOUNDERED IN THE NORTH SEA. Yesterday afternoon the Danish schooner 'Johanne Magdalene', of the port of Nykjøbio (Captain L. Petersen) arrived in Peterhead, and reported the foundering of a barque in the North Sea during succession of heavy gales which has raged within the past week or two. She also brings news of the Peterhead schooner 'Tarlair' (Captain Sangster), for the safety which fears were beginning to entertained by the owners. The 'Johanne Magdalene' is bound to Morrison haven with billetwood, and arrived the mouth of***

Tarlair (1870). (Continued).

*the Firth of Forth on Saturday, the 25th October last, having been then fully two weeks on the voyage, and took on board a pilot named John Johnston, belonging Dunbar. Shortly after they had shipped the pilot, a heavy gale of wind came on, and drove them out to sea. They have since then encountered a continued period of heavy gales, and have at times been within a few miles of the May Island, but were as often driven again out to sea. On Thursday last, the 31st October, they sighted the schooner 'Tarlair', Peterhead, which left Leven on or about the 24th October with a cargo of coal for Peterhead, where she should have arrived a few days later. The 'Tarlair' was then in latitude 56 deg. 48 mins. N. and longitude 1 deg. 39 mins. E., or 120 miles east of Peterhead, and was "lying to" with both anchors down, but with her foremast cut away. As it was too rough for the Danish vessel to approach near the **Tarlair**, a boat of the former was lowered on leeward side of the 'Tarlair', but only the pilot and mate of the schooner would venture in it owing to the heavy sea, and they spoke her from a distance. Captain Sangster reported having experienced heavy weather, so much so that they had to cut away her foremast to keep her from going under the water, or else they would never have withstood the heavy gale. As his vessel was behaving splendidly, and not drawing any water Captain Sangster was to keep to the vessel as long as she remained snug, in the hope that he would be picked up by some passing steamer, and towed to land. The crew of the 'Tarlair' were then all well. Captain Sangster also reported that a barque was lying alongside his schooner during one of the recent gales, when what he characterised as a typhoon came on, and as soon as it blew over, nothing was seen of the barque, nor any wreckage, and it is feared she had gone down. They have very few particulars of this casualty. Ever since then, the 'Johanne Magdalene' has encountered heavy weather, and has been tossing about for the past week, the crew have had to subsist on half rations of food and water. The vessel made land yesterday morning, and the pilot, who is well acquainted with the coast, at once knew he was near Peterhead, and made for that port, where, as already stated, the vessel arrived yesterday afternoon. There is still a heavy sea outside, and as soon as it appears settled, she will sail for her port of destination. Mr Johnston, the pilot, states he was never in such weather, and expected the vessel to down with them every minute. He left his wife and family 13 days ago, and as they do not know where he is, they will be greatly alarmed for his safety."*

1884, 25th November: The Buchan Observer and East Aberdeenshire Advertiser reported as follows: **"THE ABANDONED SCHOONER TARLAIR.** – Intelligence has been received at Peterhead that the schooner 'Tarlair', of Peterhead, which was abandoned in a dismantled and unmanageable condition by the crew, who were taken off by a Dutch vessel, has been picked up in the North Sea by some fishermen, who have taken her into Bergen, Norway. Mr James S. Wood, manager of the vessel, is to proceed to Norway. Captain Sangster has now arrived in Peterhead."

Tarlair (1870). (Continued).

1889, 1st January: The Buchan Observer and East Aberdeenshire Advertiser reported as follows: *"PETERHEAD VESSEL IN COLLISION IN THE FIRTH OF FORTH. Between five and six o'clock on Thursday evening, the schooner 'Tarlair', 85 tons register, of and for Peterhead. Williamson master, which had left Granton, coal laden, was run into by the North British Railway's luggage steamer 'Midlothian'. The schooners jib-boom, cutwater, and headgear were carried away, and main rail smashed. The collision occurred immediately after the schooner cleared the harbour entrance. Being thus disabled she was taken in tow by 'Midlothian' back into the harbour. The steamer was approaching Granton from Burntisland. Both vessels had the Board of Trade regulation lights burning."*

1889, 10th May: The Buchan Observer and East Aberdeenshire Advertiser reported as follows: *"PETERHEAD SCHOONER ASHORE NEAR WICK. The schooner 'Tarlair', of Peterhead, went ashore during a thick fog on Wednesday at Whaligoe, halfway between Wick and Lybster. The crew took to their boat, and afterwards got on board a Banffshire fishing boat, and were landed at Ackergill, north from Wick, the rough state of the weather rendering it difficult to enter Wick Harbour. The 'Tarlair' was bound for Barra with fish-curing stock for the owner, Mr J.S. Wood, Peterhead. Officers from the Wick Custom House and Lloyd's agent have gone to look after the vessel..."*

1889, 14th May: The Buchan Observer and East Aberdeenshire Advertiser reported as follows: *"THE STRANDING OF A PETERHEAD SCHOONER. It is not expected that the schooner 'Tarlair', which stranded at Whaligoe, south from Wick, on Wednesday will be got off. She is jammed between the rocks in a narrow inlet. Neither vessel nor cargo is insured."*

PUBLIC SALE

There will be SOLD, by Public Roup, BREAST OF OLD HARBOUR, PULTENETTOWN, on MONDAY, 1st July, at 12 o'Clock Noon,

THE FISHCURING STOCK saved from the Wreck of Schooner "Tarlair" at Whalligoe, and immediately afterwards the SAILS, ROPES, CHAINS, BLOCKS, &c., and the HULL of the Schooner "Tarlair," as she now lies at Whalligoe.

**DONALD WATERS, AGENT FOR LLOYDS,
Exposer for Underwriters.**

4th June, 1889.

Notice from the Northern Ensign and Weekly Gazette, 25th June 1889.

Agnes M. Gordon (1870).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Peterhead, Cork and Dantzig in the Baltic.

1870, 19th April: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: "**LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — *On Saturday last, a beautifully lined schooner, classed nine years A1 Lloyds, was launched from the building yard of Mr John Watson & Son, shipbuilders, Banff, in presence of a large number of spectators. The vessel was gaily decorated with bunting, and on either side of the bow, on the yard, hung flags with the mottoes, 'Forward' and 'Peace and Plenty.'* After all the preliminary preparations for the launch had been completed, considerable difficulty was experienced in getting the vessel to leave the ways, but once she began to move, she glided smoothly into the water, the ceremony of christening the schooner being the same time gracefully performed by the eldest daughter of Sheriff Gordon, after whom the vessel was named the '**Agnes Mitchell Gordon.**' The dimensions of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**' are — Length upon deck, 90 feet; depth of hold, 11 feet 6 inches; and tonnage, 128. The vessel is to be commanded by Capt. Storm, and is intended for the Baltic trade. After the launch, a number of ladies and gentlemen adjourned to a loft in the vicinity, where a service of cake and wine was given. Sheriff Gordon was called to the chair, and having returned thanks for the honour done him, he proposed the Queen and Prince and Princess of Wales. He said he had great pleasure in proposing the next toast, which was that of Prosperity to the '**Agnes Mitchell Gordon**' and the best wishes of all of them to Capt. Storm. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Anyone who was at all acquainted with Captain Storm could not doubt this, that he was an excellent man, and for him had a great esteem, both on account of his character, and also on account of the honourable position in which he was placed as being the captain of that new vessel. Doubtless, he was selected for that duty on account of his seamanship, and owing his excellent character. They all wished him their best regards, and success in any enterprise in which he might be engaged on board the '**Agnes Mitchell Gordon.**' (Applause and all the honours.) Mr Watt, National Bank, had much pleasure in giving the next toast, which was to the health of the young lady after whom the vessel had just been called — (applause) — and who so successfully performed the ceremony of christening her. Some little difficulties came in the way at first, and the ship did not move off so quickly as they could have wished, but he could not but admire the coolness with which Miss Gordon bided her time, and, then when the vessel did move, she rose to the occasion. Good health and prosperity to Miss Gordon. (Applause and all the honours.) Sheriff Gordon returned his best thanks in the name of his daughter for the manner in which her health had been drunk. He believed she had from her heart every good wish for the owners of the vessel, for the captain, and for all concerned. (Applause.) Sheriff Gordon gave the next toast, that of **Mr Watson and his son**, the builders of the vessel, who by their works had contributed greatly to the prosperity of the town. (Applause.)

Agnes M. Gordon (1870). (Continued).

Mr John Watson returned thanks. They tried to do their best in the building of their ships, and the town got the benefit of the work, as well as themselves. He hoped that they would all meet very soon on another such occasion. Mr G. W. Murray gave the owners the vessel, and Mr Bisset of the Macduff Commercial Company, who returned thanks. Mr A. Watson, gas manager, gave the young members of Mr Watson's family, and Mr Jas. Watson, who returned thanks. Rev. Mr Webb gave the Chairman, who replied. Mr Innes, painter, in complimentary terms gave the health of Mrs Gordon, who was present. (Cheers and all the honours.) Sheriff Gordon briefly acknowledged. Among the other toasts which followed were the health of Dr Manson, the tradesmen connected with the fitting out of the ship, the Croupier, Mr Watt, Mrs Storm, the female members of Watson's family, &c."

170	— M. Gordon	Sr	R.Storm	128	87·0 22·6 11·6	Banff	1870	Watson&Co.	Banff	--	Crk	9	A 1
	62441	ptI.B.	Salted		Drp.72	Watson	4mo.				A.&C.P.		2,72

Extract from Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1872.

Agnes M. Gordon (1870). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Agnes M. Gordon.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	16 th April 1870.
Owner(s)	Macduff Commercial Company.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62441.
GRT	128 tons.
Length	90 feet (27.43m).
Breadth	22 feet, 6 inches (6.86m).
Depth	11 feet, 6 inches (3.51m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1. A&CP. Anchors and cables proved at a public machine.
Other information	By 1880: Owned by George Steele, Banff.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1880, 15th November: The Aberdeen Press and Journal 17 th Nov. 1880 reported as follows: <i>“Stralsund, November 15th, 6 p.m. – The ‘Agnes M. Gordon’, from Stettin for Sunderland, totally wrecked at Arcona. Greater part of the cargo will be lost. Crew saved.”</i>

1880, 23rd November: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“SCHOONER. — We regret to learn that the schooner 'Agnes M. Gordon' of Banff has become total wreck. The vessel was on voyage from Stettin to Sunderland with a cargo of timber to be delivered the latter port, when she got into a gale while at Nor' West in the Belt. The captain put back intending to obtain shelter at Arcona. The vessel, however, took the ground, and the crew were taken off by a boat from the shore, and landed at Arcona. The vessel remaining aground, was subjected to rough weather, and has since become a total wreck. The 'Agnes M. Gordon' was built at Banff in 1870 and was 128 tons register, and owned by George Steele, baker, Banff, and others. She was commanded by Captain Masson. We understand that the loss of the vessel is covered by Insurance.”*

Amy (1870).

She was built to carry general cargo. She was classed by Lloyds Register of Shipping (LRS) as 8A1, which for this date was a relatively high classification.



Topsail schooner 'Amy'.

1870, 15th July: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: ***“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — On Tuesday last another beautiful clipper schooner was launched from the building yard of **Mr John Watson**, Banff, in presence of a very large number of spectators. This fine vessel is the property of Macduff owners, and as she glided from the ways amid the hearty cheers of all present she was gracefully named the **‘Amy’**, by Mrs Robertson, Macduff, wife of the managing owner. The short time in which this vessel has been built shows the great resources of **Mr Watson’s** establishment, and she is far from being of inferior quality, either as regards materials or workmanship, that she is classed A1, eight years. Her dimensions are — Length of keel, 85 feet, breadth of beam, 22 feet 6 inches; depth 14 feet 6 inches; registered tonnage, 140 N.N.M. She is to be commanded by Captain Moir, late of the **‘Olivia’**. After the launch a large party adjourned to the loft in the yard to drink success to the new vessel, which will form a very important addition to the shipping of the thriving port of Macduff. Mr Bisset, of the*

Amy (1870). (Continued).

*Commercial Company, presided, and Mr Robertson, the managing owner, acted as croupier. Under the happy auspices of these gentlemen the usual complimentary toasts were given and most cordially responded to. **Mr Watson**, whose fame is well known for the beautifully modelled and excellent vessels which he builds, has another schooner well advanced, and his enterprise is altogether one of the most thriving and important in Banff. The only pity is that he has not more ample space in his yard for its extension."*

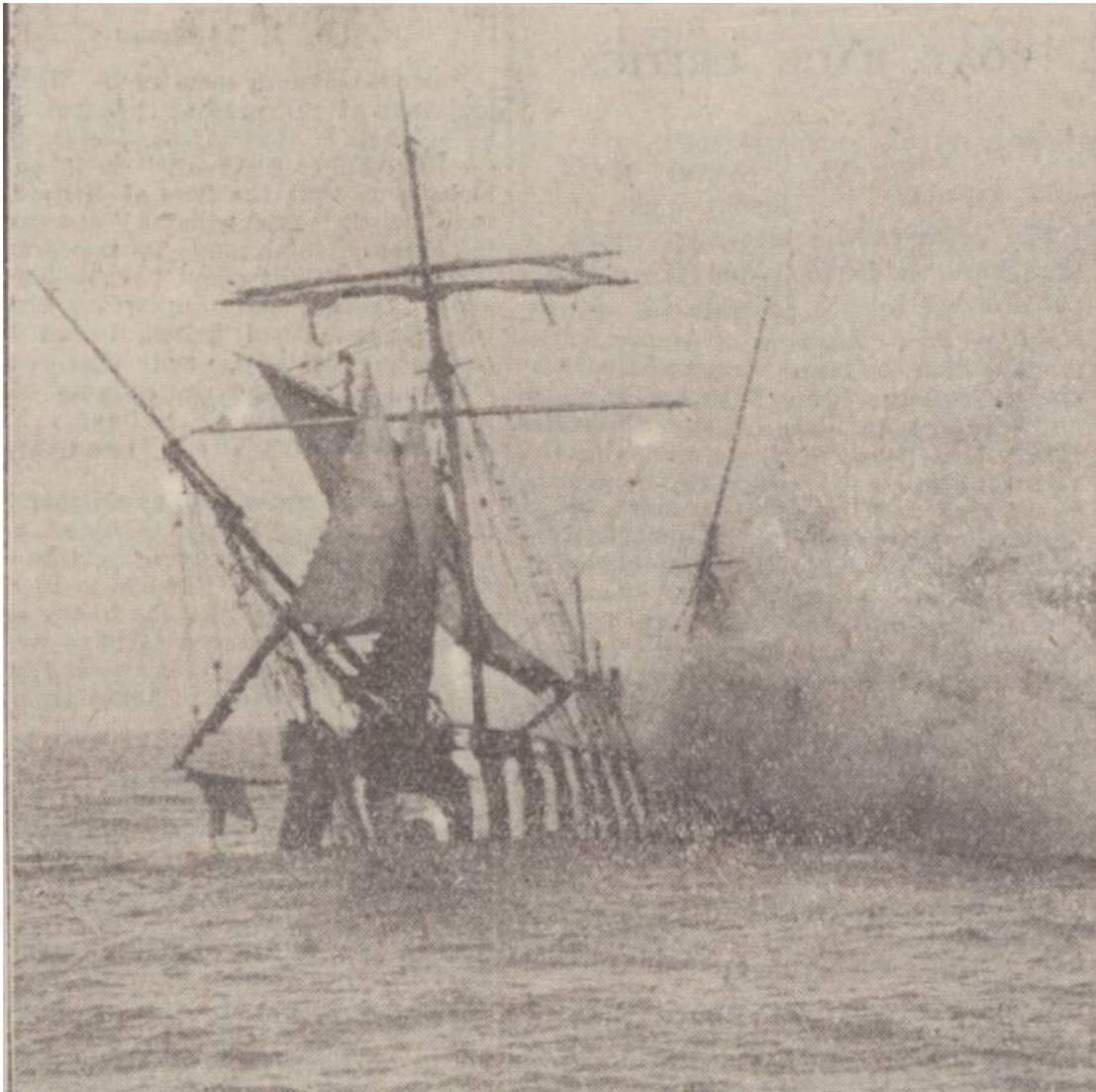
Vessel Name(s)	Amy.
Rig	Topsail Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	12 th July 1870.
Owner(s)	Messrs Bisset (manager of the Commercial Co.), Robertson (agent of the N. of S. Bank), and Mr Moir .
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62443.
GRT	140 tons N.N.M.
Length	85 feet (25.91m).
Breadth	22 feet, 6 inches (6.86m).
Depth	14 feet, 6 inches (4.42m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Figure of a young woman clasping a bunch of flowers to her breast, said to be representative of Amy the daughter of managing owner Mr Robertson. Carved at Aberdeen.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 8A1.
Other information	By 1880: Owned by Alexander Robertson, Macduff. By 1890: Owned by Phillip Willcock, Pentewan, Cornwall. By 1900: Registered at Fowey. By 1910: Owned by Mrs J. Willcocks, Calstock, Cornwall. By 1915: Owned by Alfred Park. Newcastle-upon-Tyne. By 1918: Owned by F. Crundall & Co., Fowey.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1928, March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal, 27 th March 1928 published a photograph of her being sunk for a film about the submarine war.

Amy (1870). (Continued).

1871, 23rd June: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported as follows: *“LOWESTOFT – June 23 (By telegraph): The ‘Amy’ schooner, of Banff, Moir, from Helsingborg for Lowestoft (oats), in making for the harbour last night in charge of a beachman, got on shore on north side, and was assisted off by the Rainbow tug, under agreement, and into harbour at midnight without apparent damage.”*

1928, 27th March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“The “Unsinkable” ‘Amy’. Sir, —A few particulars regarding the above schooner may be of interest to some of your readers. Built at Banff Harbour by **John Watson** to the order Messrs Bisset (manager of the Commercial Co.), Robertson (agent of the N. of S. Bank), and my father — all Macduff - she was launched in July 1870. I happened to be on board at her launch, and during my school holidays, I daily accompanied my father to Banff while she was being rigged and fitted out. By the way, the rigger was David Carnegie, late Seamen's Missionary of this city. She was named after Mr Robertson's young daughter, whom her figurehead represented. It was a striking likeness, and reflected great credit on the Aberdeen “carver” who executed it and many more of the kind from photographs. In addition there was fitted into the aftermost panel on the starboard side of the locker-heads, a coloured portrait of the young lady. Of a registered tonnage of 125, she was among the first of a fleet of schooners up to 145, such the ‘**Flower of Banff**’, ‘**Agnes M. Gordon**’, ‘**Andrew Longmore**’, etc. Owing to the fact that these ships had to carry a certificated mate, with crew of seven or eight all told, they soon gave way the 111 ton class, which was reduced to a registered tonnage of 99 so as to need only a mate. She was considered very fast, although sailormen found her a watery seaboat, and was engaged mostly in the Baltic trade. My father commanded her for eight years, until the ‘**Mary**’ was built, upon which he gave place to Capt. A. Robertson of Peterhead, who sailed her for two years or so. She was then sold to Messrs Simpson, Inverness, who ran her the coasting and London trade. While she was lying on the tiers on the Thames one of H.M. ships drifted down on her, and rolled her stanchions, rails etc., inboard, besides damaging her above the waterline. I understand she was repaired by the Admiralty and soon afterwards sold to a down-Channel port. There she was engaged carrying heavy cargoes, such as slates, cement, China clay, chalk, and whiting, which spoke well for her strength. To my knowledge she was in Aberdeen some years ago with a “white” cargo. I often think it is a pity that some of the figureheads of these schooners could not be preserved, for truly they were works of Art. I cannot imagine that there could be anything about the ‘**Amy's**’ one, seeing she is now fifty-eight years old. Perhaps an eccentric cook's carved inscription, “Cook's Office, no admittance on the galley,” or “Cave Canem” on the dog's kennel, may account for all the trouble. Truly superstition dies hard. — Yours, etc., Jas. Moir. 4 Deemount Road, Aberdeen, March 24, 1926. (See Illustration)”*.

Amy (1870). (Continued).



The sinking, for film purposes, of the Banff-built topsail schooner 'Amy' which was reported to be "haunted" and "unsinkable."

1928, 27th March: The same photograph was published in The Scotsman with the caption "**SINKING A MYSTERY SHIP.** – The old schooner 'Amy' disguised as a "Q" mystery ship, being sunk to provide a climax to a film illustrating the submarine war.

1928, 24th March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: "**FILM THRILL MISFIRES.** Schooner Refuses to Blow Up. A third attempt was made off Portland yesterday by a film company to blow up the schooner 'Amy' for the purpose of providing a thrilling climax to the picture which they are preparing, in which are shown the exploits of the "Q" mystery ships during the war. Like its predecessors, the attempt failed. When the 'Amy', filled with explosives, reached the scene of her intended grave the electric leads from the tug, by means

Amy (1870). (Continued).

of which the explosion was to take place, snapped twice. The schooner's decks and sails were then soaked in paraffin and set alight. But the flames died down. The demolition party were then directed to board the schooner again, but filled with superstitious awe, they refused, and the 'Amy' was taken back to Portland. Said to Haunted. Old seafaring men declared that the Amy was haunted, and that some mysterious agency was protecting her from the fate which has been planned for her. Others said that her figurehead, a woman clasping a bunch of flowers to her breast, which had been taken from her bows, would have to be replaced before she could be sunk. This, it is stated, the film company has decided to do."

1928, 27th March: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **"The "Unsinkable" Ship.** *Inadvertently there has been discovered the unsinkable ship — almost, for she has at last been flung into Davy Jones's locker by the united exertions of a film company, an unrecorded weight of high explosive, fire, and the guns of a British destroyer. Never did ship "die" more gamely than the little 'Amy' — even the Elizabethan 'Revenge' will not scorn to lie in her company among the barnacles and pale vegetation and monstrous fishes of the deep. The 'Amy' was acting as a Q or mystery ship for a British cinematograph film, and her part was to end when she was sunk by a German submarine. But she refused to sink even at the third time of asking, and ancient mariners wagged sagacious and foreboding heads and swore that she was under a charm. Many a sailor, on the hazardous Q ship duties of the war, would have been happy to feel Amy's stout timbers beneath his feet: he would, in the light of last week's experience of her invulnerability, have been as secure as on solid land. The 'Amy' was built at Banff! And by Macduff builders! What an advertisement for the little Moray Firth building yards! She was no ship built in the eclipse and rigged with curses "dark," but must surely have been constructed in full sun and baptised with ambrosial fluid. If any ship deserves the commemoration of the poets she does. Perhaps Sir Henry Newbolt, or Mr Alfred Noyes, or Mr John Masefield, those famous singers of the sea, will be inspired to a lyric by her, or it may be that Sir E. Hilton Young, who so happily combines politics with high finance and poetry with both, and who was on the Vindictive on her Homeric visit to Zeebrugge, will accept the task. She was, indeed, no "Flying Dutchman" to haunt the seas with towering ghostly canvas, but an ordinary, work-a-day boat built for more utilitarian purpose but not for a fate so glorious."*

The **'Revenge'** (500 tons) launched in 1577, was a new type of warship referred to as a 'Race Built Galleon', she had a crew of 250 men.

Flower of Banff (1871).

She was built to carry general cargo.

1871, 23rd June: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** *On Monday last, a very important addition was made to the shipping of the port of Banff by the launch of a very handsome clipper brigantine from the building yard of Mr John Watson. The day was fine, and a large number of spectators had assembled to witness the launch, which was very successful. As the vessel glided from her fastenings amid hearty cheers, she was named the ‘Flower of Banff’, by Miss Watson, daughter of the builder, and everyone who has seen her will be ready to admit that she well deserves her name, either as regards model, materials, or workmanship. She has a very fine elliptic stern, and in place of a figure head a billet shield. She is classed nine years, is 136 tons register, and from her excellent model must sail as all Mr Watson’s ship’s sail, and carry a large cargo for her tonnage. She is fitted up with every modern improvement, and in every respect is well calculated to sustain the well-earned fame of her builder. She is the property of local owners, the managing owner being Mr A. Watson son of the builder, and she will be commanded by Captain Masson, Findhorn. The usual banquet took place after the launch when a free exchange of friendly sentiments took place, success to the good ship ‘Flower of Banff’ not being forgotten.”*

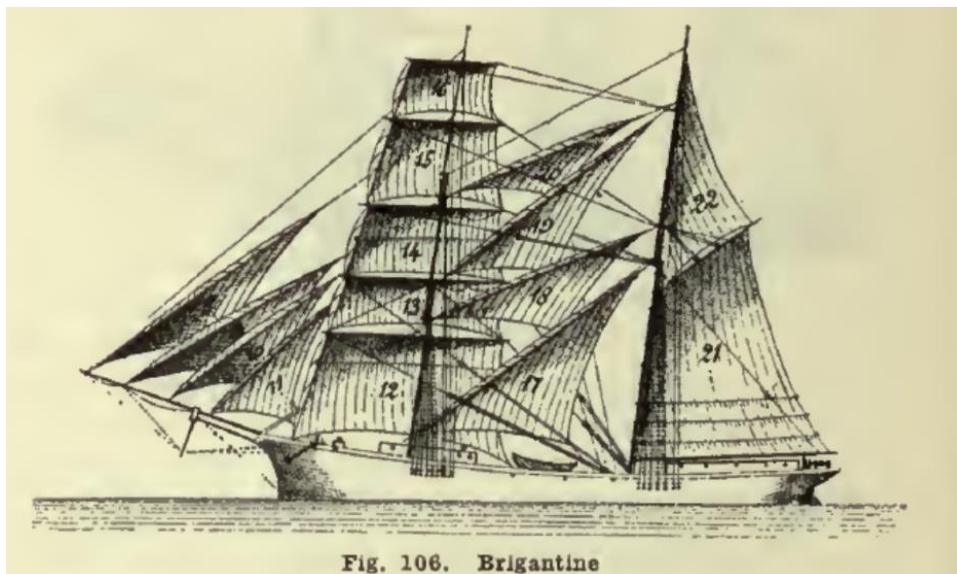
1871, 21st June: The Dundee Courier also reported on her launch, and gave the following additional information to above: *“length, 86 feet; breadth, 28.8 feet; and depth, 11.8 feet.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Flower of Banff.
Rig	Brigantine, 2 masts, 1 deck, an elliptical stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	19 th June 1871.
Owner(s)	Banff owners, managing owner - Mr Alexander Watson , son of the builder.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62451.
GRT	136 tons.
Length	86 feet (26.21m).
Breadth	20.6 feet (6.28m). <i>(28.8 ft as stated above seems incorrect).</i>
Depth	11.8 feet (3.60m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Billet Shield.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	--

Flower of Banff (1871). (Continued).

Date Scrapped / Lost	1878, 20th February: 1878, 22nd February: The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer reported as follows: “WRECK OF A SCHOONER. – A Lloyd’s telegram reports the schooner ‘Flower of Banff’ , of Banff, bound from the coast of Morocco to Silloth (Port of Carlisle) with a full cargo of produce, totally lost on Silloth Bank on Wednesday. The whole of the crew escaped in the vessel’s boats, and have reached Silloth. The ‘Flower of Banff’ , according to the shipping register, arrived at Queenstown for orders from Casablanca, and left on the 18 th inst. For Silloth.”
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1878, 26th February: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported as follows: **“FLOWER OF BANFF.** Report of George Bremner, Master of the schooner **‘Flower of Banff’**, of Banff, 126 tons, from Queenstown, Feb. 17, 11A.M., for Silloth (beans): - Proceeded; and arrived off Maryport at 9 A.M. on Wednesday, the 20th inst., with signal up for Pilot. Hove ship to, and kept signal flying, but no Pilot came off, and, with the strong flood tide and heavy wind from the S.W., the ship drifted up Channel close to the Fairway Buoy, when I bore up Channel, and passed Solway Lightship. Thence shaped course up for Silloth, and kept lead going. At 11.40 A.M., tide three-quarter flood, weather very hazy, wind SW., strong, the ship getting into shoal water, hauled her up east, when the water deepened a little, but immediately again shoaled, when the ship struck on a bank. Tried pumps, and found ship making much water. Continued striking, when we let go the anchor. After letting go the anchor went into the cabin, and found it full of water. Immediately put out boats, and all hands got into her, and abandoned ship. Had much difficulty in getting boat clear of ship. Immediately after getting away the boat cleared the ship, and capsized bottom up. Pulled boat into the southward, and got on shore at Skinburness, about two miles east from Silloth. – Silloth, Feb. 20.”



Typical Brigantine rig. (Wooden ship-building by C. Desmond - 1919).

Cairnrankie (1872).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo, and known to have carried coal to Portsoy.

1872, 6th December: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: "**LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — On Tuesday last there was launched from the building yard of **Mr John Watson**, Banff, a beautiful clipper schooner, of the following dimensions: — Length of keel, 74 feet; depth of hold, 9½ feet; breadth of beam, 20 feet 4 inches; gross registered tonnage, 83 tons — to class 9 years. The day was bitterly cold, but notwithstanding this a large number of people had turned out to witness the launch and to welcome the vessel to her future element. As usual on such occasions, there was a full display of bunting at the Coastguard flagstaff, and by the vessels in the harbour; nor was the new vessel, as is sometimes the case, ashamed to let her name be known, for on her name-board and her flags "**Cairnrankie**" was conspicuous. This name, as our local readers will know, is taken from the most prominent point in the hill of Cowhythe, to the eastward of this town — a point which by the way is of note as the chief base of the Ordnance Survey for the district, and of still more note a few years ago, as the place where the very extraordinary deflection of the plumb line was detected. The new vessel is not to form an addition to our local shipping; but, as her name indicates, she may be said, notwithstanding, to have a connection with Portsoy, as she has been built to order for Mr Alex. Wright (who is to be managing owner) Mr James Gray, watchmaker; and Mr Strachan, flesher, Macduff; and Captain George Wright of this town, by whom she will be commanded, but she will hail from Macduff. In **Mr Watson's** yard a launch is not a great novelty, but still it is with all a moment of excitement, although perhaps less so there than in many places. On Tuesday it was about one o'clock before the tide rose sufficiently, but when at last the water was believed to be sufficiently high the ceremonial did not occupy much time. The launch was one of the most successful ever witnessed, and as the really handsome vessel glided from the ways, Mrs Wright, the wife of the captain, gracefully performed the christening ceremony. As soon as the vessel was brought up by the check anchor, she was saluted with a ringing cheer by the crowd on shore, who met with a hearty response from the hearty and more venturesome crew who crowded her decks. It is enough to say in regard to the "**Cairnrankie**" that those best able to judge regard her as the finest vessel of her size which **Mr Watson** has yet built, whether as regards model, materials, or workmanship. She will be clipper rigged, and is fitted with every modern improvement. Her sails will be furnished by Mr A. Watson, Macduff; and her rigging, etc., by Mr Munro, Banff. As soon as the launch was over a large party repaired, by invitation, to the Drill Loft, where an elegant banquet of wine and cake was served up by Mr Chalmers, Ship Tavern, and Mr Hutchison, Market Inn. Mr A. Wright, the managing owner, supported by Mr George Watson, Mr Simpson of Nisbet & Co., and Mr James Gray, ably discharged the duties of the chair; while his co-owner, Mr Strachan, acted as croupier. There was a numerous party of gentlemen and a good few ladies. After full justice had been done to the loyal and patriotic toasts, there was a free interchange of sentiments usual on such occasions, and we may remark, as an illustration of the high place which **Mr Watson** has won for himself as a builder, that, in course of the proceedings, Mr Simpson observed that he could not better

Cairrankie (1872). (Continued).

express his satisfaction with the "**Cairrankie**," than by stating that tomorrow or next day **Mr Watson** would lay down the keel of an important vessel for himself — a statement which was received with hearty cheers. The meeting was one of the heartiest and most harmonious assemblages of the kind which ever took place, and we can only hope that the "**Cairrankie**" — for we presume there is only one — may have all the success which was so enthusiastically wished to her captain, owners, builders, and all who had been in any way connected or to be connected with her. She is a most beautiful craft - sits in the water like a duck, and, if it is her fortune to keep clear of shoals and quick-sands, should "walk the waters like a thing of life.""

Vessel Name(s)	Cairrankie.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	3 rd December 1872.
Owner(s)	Mr Alexander Wright (managing owner), Mr James Gray , watchmaker; and Mr Strachan , flesher, Macduff; and Captain George Wright (master), Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62462.
GRT	83 tons.
Length	74 feet (22.56m). (at her keel).
Breadth	20 feet, 4 inches (6.20m).
Depth	9 feet, 6 inches (2.90m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	By 1880: Owned by Alexander Wright, Macduff. (LRS) By 1890: Owned by George Wright, Portsoy.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1893, 17th / 18th November: On passage from Sunderland to Portsoy with a cargo of coal she foundered in a gale near the entrance to the Moray Firth. All four crew members were lost. (See below for more information).

1893, 29th November: The Aberdeen Evening Express reported as follows: "**A MISSING BANFFSHIRE SHIP.** In addition to the Banffshire ship '**Admiral**' reported yesterday as being supposed to be lost during the recent gale, is now feared that the schooner '**Cairrankie**', of Portsoy, is also lost. She left Sunderland on the 2nd inst., with a cargo of coal for Portgordon. She arrived in the Firth of Forth all right; and the latest news respecting her is that she left Burntisland Roads on the evening the 16th inst., so that it is probable she experienced the full force of the storm when near the entrance to the Moray Firth. The '**Cairrankie**' carried four of crew. The captain belonged to Whitehills, near Banff, and the remainder of the hands to Portsoy."

Bella (1872).

She was built to carry general cargo and mainly carried coal in her later years.

The Banffshire Reporter - Friday 1st March 1872, reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT Banff.** — *On Monday last, a very handsome vessel of about 102 tons register was launched from the building-yard of Mr John Watson, Banff amid the hearty cheers of a very large number of spectators who had assembled to witness the interesting ceremony. The dimensions of the new vessel are: - Length, 80 feet; breadth, 21½ feet; depth, 10½ feet; and she is classed A1 nine years. This vessel was built to order for Mr D. R. Simpson, ironmonger, Wick, and she was named the ‘Bella’ by Mrs Grant, wife of Captain Grant, of the ‘Maggie’, built by Mr Watson for the same owner, by whom she will be commanded. The vessels built by Mr Watson are famed for their beautiful models and fine sailing qualities, but as regards model materials, and workmanship. his own opinion is, that the ‘Bella’ is the most perfect and beautiful vessel which he has yet built, which is certainly saying a good deal. The woodwork of the cabin is teak, and beautifully finished. After the launch there was the usual banquet of wine and cake to drink success to all concerned with the ‘Bella’ - all doubtless wishing that she may long escape the fate of that other ‘Bella’, rendered so famous in the Tichborne case. Mr Watson is about to lay down another vessel for local owners, from which it appears that the shipbuilding business is still prosperous in Banff, as we observe that the Messrs Geddie appear to have always their hands full, and turn out a number of handsome vessels.”*

COALS! COALS! COALS!

SCHOONER “BELLA”

On passage with Cargo of
**BEST ENGLISH (TUNSTALL WALLSEND)
 HOUSEHOLD COALS.**

Orders for delivery ex ship now being booked.

Advertisement in the Inverness Courier, 15th November 1904.

Bella (1872). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Bella.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	1872.
Owner(s)	Mr David R. Simpson , ironmonger, Wick.
Registered Port	Wick. Official No.: 62700.
GRT	97 tons.
Length	80.5 feet (24.54m).
Breadth	19.4 feet (5.91m).
Depth	10.3 feet (3.14m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Fitted, but details unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. LRS Surveyor: Alexander Linton.
Other information	<p>1883, March: Owned solely by John S. Simpson.</p> <p>1889, April: Still owned by John S. Simpson, but put up for sale.</p> <p>1890, 7th April: The Aberdeen Evening Express reported as follows: <i>“WICK SCHOONER STRANDED. – Our Thurso correspondent telegraphs: - The schooner ‘Bella’ of Wick (pavement), Campbell, master, went ashore when leaving Castlehill Harbour this forenoon. The accident happened through the force of the wind, and the vessel not getting under full way when clearing the harbour. It is not known what injury the vessel has sustained, bit owing to the rocks on which she is stranded it must be serious. The cargo must be jettisoned.”</i></p> <p>1891, February: Owned by William R. Low & Seymour J. Putivairo of Whitstable, South Shields.</p> <p>1891, August: Owned by Mary J. Low & Joseph Masson, Findhorn.</p> <p>1894, April: Owned by Joseph Masson, Findhorn.</p> <p>1903, May: Owned by Mrs A. Mathison or Masson.</p> <p>1903, June: Owned by William Smith, Findhorn.</p> <p>1905, 14th October: From Sunderland for Findhorn with a cargo of coals, master Captain John Smith, she arrived at Lossiemouth with a broken mainmast, her sails in ribbons, her foretopmast, foretopsail, forestaysail and jib all lost in the gale in the Moray Firth 13th October. From the shore it looked like the vessel was about to be wrecked so the crew of the Life Saving Apparatus were on the scene and the lifeboat was on standby ready to be launched.</p>
Date Scrapped / Lost	c1906 / 1907: Thought to have been scrapped.

Bella (1872). (Continued).



SCHOONER FOR SALE.

ON 3rd May at 12 o'Clock Noon, at **PULTENEY HARBOUR**, by Public Auction, the **Schooner** "BELLA" of **WICK**, 96 tons register, 185 tons dead weight, stows 1100 Barrels of Herrings. This well-known **Schooner** was built in 1872 in Watson's Yard, **BANFF**, and is just out of Carpenter's hands, under Board of Trade Surveyor at Yarmouth. Has always been kept in the best of order, has a good outfit, and is a fast sailer.

JOHN SIMPSON, Owner

Wick, April 22

Advertisement in the John o' Groat Journal, 30th April 1889.

Sovereign (1872).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo.

Referred to as a clipper schooner.

1872, 9th August: The Elgin Courant, and Morayshire Advertiser reported as follows: *“BANFF — LAUNCH. — A schooner of the following dimensions was launched from the building-yard of Mr John Watson on Saturday: — Length of keel 80 feet, beam 22½ feet, depth of hold 9½ feet, and her register tonnage is 82 tons. She is named the ‘Sovereign’, and has been built for Banff owners. She is to be commanded by Captain Turner of the late ‘Sovereign’.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Sovereign.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	3 rd August 1872.
Owner(s)	Henry Munro, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62459.
GRT	82 tons. (145 tons deadweight.)
Length	79.6 feet (24.26m). (At her keel).
Breadth	17.8 feet (5.43m).
Depth	9 feet, 6 inches (2.90m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	<p>By 1874: Owned by J.G.S. Longmore, Banff.</p> <p>1878, 1st February: At a public roup she was sold to Mr A. Walker, slater, Banff for £495. GRT stated as 78 tons, and she carried 145 tons deadweight. (Approx. £58,500 in 2020).</p> <p>1878, 22nd December: She had her bowsprit, jibboom, fore-topmast, topsail yard, and topsail carried away during a collision with the steamer ‘Cestos’ of London off Dungeness Head. She was towed into Dover harbour; her master was Captain Sinton.</p>
Date Scrapped / Lost	1889, 22nd July: The Glasgow Herald, 24 th July 1889, reported that the <i>“Lloyd's agent at Lerwick telegraphs that the ‘Sovereign’ (schooner), of Banff, laden with salt, which sailed from Balta Sound on Monday night, during a fog ran on Vere Rocks, and sank in deep water.”</i>

Regarding her beam I found two sources for her length, however it’s most likely that 17.8 feet is correct, rather than the 22.5 feet reported in the Press.

Sovereign (1872). (Continued).

Topsail schooner in the bay of Cullen. (Photographer unknown).

1849, 26th June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“CASE OF CHOLERA ON SHIPBOARD.** – We regret to announce that a case of cholera, which ended fatally, occurred on board the schooner ‘**Sovereign**’ of Banff when on her last voyage from London to this port. The deceased was a young man of the name of Mackenzie, belonging to Cullen. It appears that he was first seized on Tuesday, the 5th instant, when the vessel was in Yarmouth Roads, and the captain (Cravie), after some humane attempts at cure with the remedies available on shipboard, put back to Lowestoft, and, with the consent of the authorities, landed the patient at that place. Here he was most kindly treated, and every attention paid him which compassion could dictate of medical skill suggest. All, however, was without avail, and intelligence was received here on Saturday last, announcing his death on the 8th instant. What renders his melancholy death peculiarly distressing is the circumstance that he was the “only son of his mother, and she is a widow.” We may remark that, while the case happened on shipboard, in a narrow space, none of the other parties on board were attacked – a fact which seems to add another to the many proofs already existing that the disease is non-contagious.”

Alice (1873).

1873, 12th September: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: "**LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — On the forenoon of Tuesday last another very handsome schooner was launched from the building yard of **Mr John Watson**, Banff. A ship launch is at all times an event of interest, but the excitement of it is all the more enjoyable when it is accompanied by favourable weather, as the one at Banff was on Tuesday. The consequence was that there were a good many spectators, though not so many as we have seen on previous occasions. This may have arisen from the fact that it was generally known that the vessel had been built on the patent slip, and the launch likely to be attended with less risk or difficulty. There was of course the usual display of flags, the coastguardmen having their flagstaff fully occupied. At the appointed time, and everything being in readiness, Mrs George, wife of Mr George, solicitor, Macduff — as we understood - took her place, bottle in hand, and as the vessel was released from the chain and run, down the rails of the slip, that lady named her '**Alice**', amid the cheers of all present. This last excellent specimen or **Mr Watson's** ability as a shipbuilder, is of the following dimensions: — Length, 84½ feet; breadth, 21 feet; depth, 10½, feet; registered tonnage, 111 tons N.N.M. She will be schooner rigged and was launched with her masts set and part of her rigging fixed. She has an elliptic stern, and an elegant figure head, which as her name imports — is of female form. Her outfits are by Miss Cairnie, Macduff and her chains, anchors, etc. by Messers Lumsden, Sunderland. She has been built to order, and under inspection, for Mr Bisset, Macduff Commercial Company, and other Macduff owners; and will be commanded by Captain Davidson, late of the '**Tarlair**'; and she can hardly fail to prove an important addition to the shipping of the thriving port whose name she is to bear. Of her model, materials, and the manner in which she has been built and finished, it is unnecessary to say more than that as she is **Mr Watson's** last, so she may be safely regarded as his best, as he has too high a sense of his well-earned fame to run any risk of going backward. As another example, as well of his enterprise as of the prosperity of the shipbuilding and shipping interests, we may mention that while the one vessel was being launched, a portion of his hands were engaged in setting the stern post of another of about the same size, for Banff owners, the keel of which had been previously laid. After the launch was over the usual banquet took place in the Volunteers' drill loft, when we have no doubt that success was freely pledged to the builder, owners, captain, and all in any way concerned with the good ship "**Alice** of Macduff.' As further evidence of the prosperity of the shipbuilding interest—which is one of the most important industries of Banff — we may mention that the **Messrs Geddie** have another good sized vessel all but ready for launching in their yard, which we understand is also for local owners."

Alice (1873). (Continued).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Banff, Aberdeen, Stettin, Baltic, later used as a coaster.

Vessel Name(s)	Alice.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, an elliptical stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	9 th September 1873.
Owner(s)	John Bisset , Inch, Aberdeenshire.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62469.
GRT	112 tons.
Length	83.9 feet (25.57m). Length of keel 80.8 feet (24.63m).
Breadth	21.7 feet (6.61m).
Depth	10.3 feet (3.14m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic oak, larch, pitch pine, Dantzic red pine and American pine.
Figurehead	Female.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. LR Surveyor: Thomas W. Kettle. 1882, October: Class reduced to 6A1.
Other information	1873: Master, Davidson. 1882: Still owned by Bisset & Co. with master D. Davidson (LR). 1899, 30th December: The Dundee Courier reported as follows: <i>“CASUALTIES. Portland, Dec. 29. – Schooner ‘Alice’, of Banff, fired rocket early this morning, and was towed into safe anchorage by tug ‘Petrel’, having collided with steamer ‘Bangarth’, of Liverpool. Damage, if any, unknown.”</i> By 1910: Owned by David Main, Findhorn, Morayshire.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1920: British Register closed; fate unknown. At 47-years old, she was probably scrapped.

Norseman (1873).

She was built to carry general cargo, and originally built for trade to the Baltic.

1873, 29th May: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported as follows: *“On the 24th inst. a clipper schooner was launched from the building-yard of Mr. Watson, at Banff Harbour. The vessel is named the ‘Norseman’, and is intended for the Baltic trade. The dimensions are 83 feet of keel and 87 feet of length deck; depth, 10 feet 11 inches; and breadth over all 21 feet 9 inches. The ‘Norseman’ is classed nine years A1 at Lloyds. Built to order, the ‘Norseman’*

Norseman (1873). (Continued).

has been very carefully surveyed when on the stocks and is entirely of first-class material. The figurehead is a full-length representation a Norse warrior. The 'Norseman' belongs to Banff, the Managing Owner being Mr. John W. Simpson. The Commander will be Captain Adams, formerly of the 'Constance'.

Vessel Name(s)	Norseman.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	24 th May 1873.
Owner(s)	John Walker Simpson , No. 26½ Low Street, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 62467.
GRT	125 tons.
Length	87 feet (26.52m). (83 feet at keel).
Breadth	21 feet, 9 inches (6.63m).
Depth	10 feet, 11 inches (3.33m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Full size representation a Norse warrior.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	1886, 26th March: The Dundee Courier, reported as follows: <i>"BURGHEAD. Accident. — About nine o'clock on Saturday morning a serious accident occurred on board the schooner 'Norseman', of Banff, whereby one of the crew, a young man named Charles Sailes, belonging to Macduff, was badly, if not fatally, injured. The unfortunate lad was engaged scraping the jib when lost his hold and fell to the deck, a distance of about 50 feet. Dr Adam, of Elgin, was telegraphed for, and was soon in attendance on the injured man. He found he had sustained a fracture of the elbow joint and internal injuries of a serious nature."</i>
Date Scrapped / Lost	1890, January: On passage from London to Mogadore she was wrecked at Morrocco, all hands saved. (See below for further info.).

1890, 5th February: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *"WRECK OF A BANFF SCHOONER. Telegraphic information has been received in Banff by Mr John W. Simpson, managing owner of the schooner 'Norseman', of Banff, to the effect that that vessel was a total wreck on the coast of Morocco, but that the crew had all been saved. The schooner was commanded Alexander Mair, Banff. She was on a voyage from London to Mogadore with general cargo. The 'Norseman's' tonnage was 119, and was built at Banff in 1873."*

Andrew Longmore (1874).

She was built to carry general cargo.

1874, 21st July: The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette reported as follows: *“LAUNCHES. On the 14th inst. a schooner of 144 tons was launched from the building yard of Messrs. Watson and Sons at Banff, and was named the ‘Andrew Longmore’. The vessel classed A1 at Lloyd’s for nine years, and will sail from Banff to the Baltic and Mediterranean.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Andrew Longmore.
Rig	Schooner, 2 or 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	14 th July 1874.
Owner(s)	James G. S. Longmore and George Mair, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 69889.
GRT	143 tons.
Length	93.4 feet (28.47m).
Breadth	23 feet (7.01m).
Depth	11.4 feet (3.47m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	<p>1879: Owned by William Coutts, Banff.</p> <p>1886: Owned by Robert Morrison, Banff.</p> <p>1892: Managing owner James W. Simpson, Banff.</p> <p>1893: Owned by John W. Simpson, Banff.</p> <p>1896, 21st October: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: <i>“A Lloyd’s telegram says the schooner ‘Andrew Longmore’, Banff for Stettin with herring, has arrived at Copenhagen slightly damaged through collision with the Danish brig ‘Alliance’, of Bornholm with coal.”</i></p>
Date Scrapped / Lost	<p>1899, 28th June: She stranded near Beacon, Stroma, Pentland Firth, Scotland and became a total loss. All hands were saved, master captain William Angus.</p> <p>See below for more information.</p>

Andrew Longmore (1874). (Continued).

1899, 5th July: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: “**BANFF SCHOONER WRECKED.** A LLOYD'S telegram says the schooner ‘**Andrew Longmore**’, of Banff, Westonpoint for Banff, stranded on Thursday night near Beacon, Stroma, Pentland Firth, and became a total loss. The crew were saved. All went well until the Pentland Firth was reached. When the vessel neared the island of Stroma, the wind fell away, and there was a dead calm. At this point there is a strong current, and on Thursday night the tide was running at from eight to nine miles an hour. Caught in this heavy current, and with no wind, the vessel was driven ashore on Stroma Island, all endeavors to clear the island being of no avail. It was seen that the ship would break up, and orders were at once given to get ready a boat. There was no time to think of saving anything, as at any moment the vessel might heave over and engulf the crew in the surging waters. Thus the crew, which consisted of Mr Wm. Angus, captain; Mr James Allan, Banff, mate; Mr Alex. Brown, Banff; Mr Walter Wilson, Banff; and Mr Neil McLeod, Macduff, had to leave just with the clothes they stood in. The vessel stranded at half-past ten o'clock on Thursday night, and half an hour after the crew had got safely away the ship turned keel up. The members of the crew landed in the boat on the mainland, whence information of the unfortunate affair was telegraphed to Banff. The crew arrived in Banff on Saturday night. The ‘**Andrew Longmore**’ was built at Banff in 1874, and had a net tonnage of 135 tons.”

Fleetwing (1874).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have carried Wallsend coals.

1874, 13th February: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: “**LAUNCH AT BANFF.** - On Tuesday last week another fine vessel was launched from the building yard of **Mr John Watson**, shipbuilder, Banff, in presence of a large number of spectators. The launch was very successful, and the vessel was named the ‘**Fleetwing**’, by Mrs Ironside, wife of Captain Ironside, by whom she is to be commanded. The dimensions of the new vessel are: — length of keel, 81 feet; breadth of beam, 21 feet 6 inches; depth of hold 10 feet 4 inches. She is schooner rigged, of 110 tons register classed A1 nine years, and is in every respect well calculated to sustain the widespread fame of her builders. She belongs to Banff owners, and Mr Munro, rope and sail maker, is to be ship's husband. As soon as the launch was over the usual cake and wine banquet took place in the draughting loft, and the usual kindly interchange of sentiments took place. The ‘**Fleetwing**’ is intended for the Baltic trade. We have often observed that **Mr Watson's** business appears to be only limited by the size of his yard, as he has always one keel ready to lay down as soon as his last built vessel has kissed the water. On the present occasion he has laid the keel of another vessel of which J. G. Longmore, Banff is to be the principal owner. In short, the shipping enterprise in Banff was never more brisk than it has appeared to be for some time past.”

Fleetwing (1874). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Fleetwing.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	3 rd February 1874.
Owner(s)	Henry Munro, William Ironside, Robert Morrison and Alexander Milne, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 69886.
GRT	111 tons.
Length	85.2 feet (25.97m). (81 feet at keel).
Breadth	21.7 feet (6.61m).
Depth	10.3 feet (3.14m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	1897, 15th December: <i>The Aberdeen Press and Journal</i> reported as follows: “ SALVAGE AWARD AGAINST A BANFF SCHOONER. At Great Yarmouth County Court on Friday, the Yarmouth Tug Company were awarded £150 salvage for services rendered to the schooner ‘ Fleetwing ’, of Banff, during the recent gale.” (£150 in 1897 is equivalent to approx. £16,400 in 2024). 1902: Owned by James J. Stafford, Stonebridge, County Wexford, Ireland and registered at Wexford, master Captain George Murphy.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1919, 9th January: On passage from Newport for Wexford, Captain George Murphy, with coal she grounded at Bel's Point, Caernarvon Bay, four crew members survived, one died from exposure. See below for further details of the shipwreck. Vessel owner was James J. Stafford. Crew members were Captain George Murphy, Thomas Murphy, Patrick Whelan, Matthew Neill, and James Carroll (died).

1919, 18th January: The Free Press (Wexford) reported as follows: “**WEXFORD SCHOONER WRECKED. DRIVEN ASHORE IN CARNARVON BAY. Terrible sufferings of the Crew. Mate dies of Exposure. Thrilling Rescue Stories.** During a severe south-westerly gale on Thursday 9th inst., the schooner “**Fleetwing**” of Wexford (Mr J. J. Stafford, M.C.C. Wexford, whilst on a voyage from Newport, Monmouthshire to Wexford, with a cargo of coal, was driven ashore at Dinas Diallye, in Carnarvon Bay, about five miles from the town of Carnarvon. The vessel, which was one of 160 tons, left Newport on the 27th December, with a crew of five consisting of Capt. George Murphy, The Faythe, Wexford (master); James Carroll, Michael Street, Wexford

Fleetwing (1874). (Continued).

(mate); Thomas Murphy, High Street, Wexford; Matthew Neill, Maudtintown, Wexford, and Patrick Wehlan, Distillery Road, Wexford. She encountered stormy weather soon after putting out to sea, and the elements increasing in fury the master tried to make for Fishguard, in Pembrokeshire, but failed owing to the severity of the weather, and his vessel was driven helplessly northwards. When outside Pwllheli he made another attempt to seek shelter, this time in St. Tudwal's Roads, but was unable to gain safe harbourage. The craft was dismantled (dismasted?), the sails having been carried away by the violence of the storm, and she drifted about at the mercy of the wind and waves. She drove ashore about one o'clock on Thursday afternoon at Dinas Dinlle, a sparsely populated district, with only an occasional farmhouse here and there, and a hotel (Carnarvon Bay Hotel) in the distance. The captain had made a gallant attempt to steer his more or less unmanageable vessel through the treacherous Carnarvon Bar to the Menai Straits, where he would have had good shelter, but the wind and the capricious current forced the vessel on to a sand bank about 100 yards below high water mark. The few inhabitants of the place had seen the vessel in distress in Carnarvon Bay and when she grounded they ran to the shore in the hope of being able to render assistance, but, unfortunately, there was no life-saving apparatus in the locality, and the people in the beach were compelled to be helpless spectators of a shipwreck. The schooner was washed in on the shoal in the tempestuous sea, and the waves washing over her there was grave danger of her breaking up almost immediately. The plight of the unfortunate crew was indeed a desperate one. They were unable to leave the doomed craft and those on shore were powerless to assist them. The terrific storm and rain made it almost impossible to remain on the shore let alone to lend a hand to the crew of the "Fleetwing". Those on the beach could see the men on board the vessel waving their hands and gesticulating, but they could not render them any help. Meanwhile Mrs Todd, of the Carnarvon Bay Hotel, had telephoned to the Customs Authorities and Lloyd's Agent at Carnarvon (Mr. J. Edwards Jones), and they wired to Pwllheli, the nearest life-saving station, eighteen miles away for assistance, but it was about nine o'clock when the apparatus and a crew of fifteen arrived on the scene. By half-past six the wind had moderated somewhat, and tide had also receded considerably. Police Sergeant Jones, of Penygroes, and a number of farmers and others from the district decided to make an effort to rescue the crew. The rescuers at grave personal risk, waded through the water about twenty yards, carrying ropes, and succeeded in reaching the vessel, which was boarded by Sergt. Jones, Thomas Williams, and a man named Evans. One of the crew seemed to be resting against the side of the ship in a more or less prostrate state with his head hanging over the rail. The other four were lying on the deck in an exhausted condition. On closer inspection one of the four, James Carroll (mate) was seen to be unconscious. The police sergeant and his

Fleetwing (1874). (Continued).

helpers lowered the crew by means of the ropes from the vessel and were able to get all the five men ashore. Carroll died shortly after from exposure. A motor car was requisitioned, and the survivors were removed to the Carnarvon Bay Hotel, where they were cared for by Mr and Mrs Todd who provided them with warm blankets, beds and clothing. Thanks to the hospitable treatment given them the men partially recovered from the effects of their terrible experience. Financial assistance was given the survivors by the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society and National Sailors' Society. Mr Stafford, who had journeyed to the scene on receipt of the news of the disaster, looked after the interests of the men, and made arrangements for the removal of the remains of the victim to his native Wexford. The vessel gradually broke up in the meantime, and though hopes are still entertained of recovering part of the cargo it is feared that the vessel has become a total wreck.

INQUEST OF THE VICTIM**Story of the Crew's Sufferings.**

On Saturday at the Carnarvon Bay Hotel, Mr O'Robyns Owen, the South Carnarvonshire Coroner, held an inquest on the body of James Carroll. Captain Murphy, the master of the "**Fleetwing**", said that after leaving Newport on the 27th December, the vessel encountered very stormy weather, and he made a number of attempts to run her into a place of safety, but he failed. She was driven along by the wind and after the sails had been carried away, she finally grounded in Carnarvon Bay.

Impossible to Remain on Shore.

Police-Sergeant Jones of Penygroes, gave evidence, describing how the men, five in number, were got ashore from the vessel. Witness arrived at Dinas Dinlle about 3.30 o'clock on Thursday. At that time a terrific storm of wind and rain rendered it almost impossible to remain on shore, let alone lend a hand to the crew of the '**Fleetwing**', which had grounded about 400 yards below high water mark. There being no life-saving apparatus on the spot, messages had been despatched to Pwllheli earlier in the day, but it was not till about nine o'clock that a proper apparatus and a crew arrived. In the meantime, when the schooner was within some 20 yards of the shore, witness, accompanied by Thomas Williams (Morfa Wawr) and a third man, named Evans, waded through the water to the vessel and were followed by P.C. Williams. A member of the crew had his head hanging over the vessel and upon being spoken to by the sergeant, he, with great difficulty got down, and was helped ashore by a number of men who had assembled from the neighbouring houses. From the water no other members of the crew could be detected. Thereupon Hugh Evan Roberts, a sailor residing at Belan Point, entered the vessel by means of a rope, and there found four men in a prostrate condition, Carroll the mate being unconscious. They were let down from the ship by a rope,

Fleetwing (1874). (Continued).

and after being carried ashore, were conveyed by motor cars to the bungalow attached to the Carnarvon Bay Hotel. Carroll expired shortly after being brought ashore.

Absence of Life-Saving Apparatus.

Dr Edwin Shelton Roberts also gave evidence. Summoned from Penygroes early in the afternoon, he told the Coroner that had there been life-saving apparatus available nearer the spot, Carroll's life might have been saved, and the sufferings of the other men materially diminished. He telephoned at one o'clock to Carnarvon for help, and he was notified that the Customs authorities at Carnarvon sent two messages for assistance from Pwllheli the second message to the effect that men must be got together at once. It was however, nearly nine o'clock before the life-saving apparatus arrived from Pwllheli. The crew of the vessel had been rescued. They were provided with clothing and hot blankets by Mr and Mrs Todd, of the Carnarvon Bay Hotel, to whose kindness the men largely owe their lives. A verdict of "Death from exposure" was returned."

A SAD HOMECOMING.

The survivors reached Dublin on Monday night and were accommodated at the Catholic Seamen's Institute where their wants were attended to by Mr J.C. Mahony. On Tuesday morning they returned to their homes by the mail train, and with them was brought all that was earthly of their unfortunate comrade, Carroll, who had shared the fate of so many of Wexford's seamen of the past. The remains which were enclosed in a handsome oak coffin, were met at the station by the majority of Wexford's seafaring community, who accompanied them to the home of the family. The procession through the street of the town was indeed a sad one, and on all sided expressions of sympathy were voiced.

THE VICTIM OF THE DISASTER.

James Carroll, who lost his life in the disaster, was a man of 31 years and leaves a wife and four children to mourn his loss. He came of a seafaring stock, and like his father before him, obeyed, at an early age, the call of the sea. He went as a boy before the mast, and for years had been sailing in schooners from the home port. Last year, owing to eye trouble, he gave up his position as mate of the ill-fated 'Fleetwing' and engaged in work at the port. During the summer he worked at the Admiralty dredger at Ferrybank. It was only last November he decided to go to sea again, and it was while on his first trip after the interval in his sea-going life that he fell a victim to the perils which beset the path of the mariner. His death has caused great grief particularly amongst Wexford's seafaring community, with whom he was extremely popular. His family circle was overwhelmed with grief when our representative paid a visit for the purpose of eliciting information as to the sad occurrence. The widow, with four young children, the deceased's mother and other relatives were seated around a cosy fire.



James Carroll.

Fleetwing (1874). (Continued).

James, the mother said, was thirty-one years of age. He went to sea when fourteen. His father met his death by drowning twenty-four years ago, and strange to say James died on January 12th, and his father on January 9th. At this stage another lady member of the group interjected with the further interesting coincidence that the husband of another member of the family also died in the same month. The wreck occurred in Carnarvon Bay as the crew tried to run the boat into Holyhead, added a third lady, who related a brief narrative of the happenings of that eventful night. "The storm overtook them", she proceeded, and they steered the vessel to the beach. That was at 1pm, and they were not rescued until 8pm. Although there were many people on the beach they could not render any assistance. The storm raged furiously hurling tons of sand into the air, as, the people of the locality stated, it never did before. The crew had their lifebelts on and were ready to attempt swimming ashore, when the people on the beach screamed in an united voice – "Don't, or you will be surely lost." The crew remained on the schooner until the tide fell away. Then the people on the shore waded to their rescue. Motor cars were waiting to receive them. All kinds of comforts were provided for the crew. They were taken to a hotel, the proprietress of which was on the beach with a motor car. On arriving at the hotel unceasing acts of kindness were performed, and stimulants served in order to revive the men, all of whom were prostrate. Artificial respiration was resorted to for James, who was seemed the worst, but to no avail, his death occurring an hour after arrival. None of his comrades knew about his death until the next morning. The kindness of the people to them excelled any that could be extended to them, even in their own country. A motor car was despatched a journey of seven miles for a priest, who came and ministered the last rites, and remained with the sufferers until the next morning. He even brought candles to place in James' room after he died. "James and I were married", said the afflicted widow, "over seven years. He was a devoted husband and a loving father." "I was told" added the weeping mother, "that he was reciting the Rosary and making Acts of Contrition during their trials. The remains arrived in Wexford on Tuesday, and before their removal to Holyhead a beautiful wreath of variegated leaves was placed on the coffin by the people who assisted in the rescue of the crew. Captain Murphy, my brother-in-law, and uncle of James, was unfit to travel and he was detained. A large gathering of townspeople met the remains on their arrival on Tuesday at Wexford station whence they were removed to Michael Street. On Wednesday they were interred at Crosstown Cemetery.

This lengthy press article continued with the 'Survivors Stories.'

Mary (1875).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo.

1875, 1st October: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF, yesterday forenoon another very important addition was made to the shipping of the thriving port of Macduff, by the launch of a very fine schooner from the building yard of **Messrs Watson & Sons**, Banff. We have often had occasion to say that the business of these now famous shipbuilders might be very greatly expanded were it not for the smallness of their yard; and in consequence of the want of more sufficient accommodation, the vessel launched yesterday had been built on the patent slip, though not of course, on the cradle of it. The launch was thus not a launch in the ordinary sense of the word; but, as the sequel showed it was attended with far more trouble and difficulty than if it had been so. The machinery of the patent slip appears to be getting pretty much the worse for tear and wear, as besides very great difficulty in getting the vessel to start, she did not go down with sufficient force to carry her into sufficient water to float her. In all other respects the launch was very successful, and all that had to be done to make it entirely so, was to draw the vessel up a little on the slip again and more thoroughly clear the slip at low water. In the bustle we missed the lady's name who performed the ceremony of christening; but she certainly did not miss the vessel, as she named her the **‘Mary’**, amid the cheers of all around, when she began to move. The dimensions of the **‘Mary’**, which is full rigged and equipped with all her sails bent, are as follows: - Length of keel, 81 feet: overall, about 84 feet; depth of hold, 10 feet, 4 inches; breadth of beam 21 feet 6 inches. She is registered 99 tons; but her gross tonnage is considerably more. She is classed A1 for nine years. In point of materials, model, and workmanship she is the builders; last and best, which is all that need be said, as the style in which **Messrs Watson** build and finish their vessels is already well known. She has been built for Mr Robertson, banker, Mr Farquharson and Mr George, solicitor, all of Macduff, under the inspection of Captain Moir, late of the **‘Amy’**, of that port, by whom she will be commanded, and who is also a part owner; and she is already chartered to proceed to the Baltic. The launch banquet, which was purveyed by Mr Chalmers of the Ship Tavern, took place in the Volunteers’ drill loft adjoining the harbour, and was attended by a large number of ladies and gentlemen connected with the towns of Banff and Macduff. Mr George, solicitor, presided, and Captain Moir discharged the duties of croupier. The CHAIRMAN having apologized for the unavoidable absence of Mr Robertson, who is to act as managing owner of the **‘Mary’**, gave in succession the health of Her Majesty and the Prince and Princess of Wales, and other loyal and patriotic toasts, all of which were loyally responded to.*

Mary (1875). (Continued).

*Captain Hodge then in very happy terms proposed success to the ‘Mary’ and to her owners, coupling the toast with the name of Captain Moir, for whom the Chairman replied to the toast. Mr Gray, watchmaker, Macduff, in an effective speech proposed the health of the builders and all the other tradesmen engaged in the construction and outfitting of the vessel. He spoke in very eulogistic terms of the way in which they had performed this work, and in absence of the **Messrs Watson** (whose attention was still engrossed with the vessel) he coupled with his toast the name of Mr Robert Watson, blacksmith, who made a very effective reply.*

Ex-Provost DALLAS, in exceedingly complimentary terms proposed the health of Captain Moir, with whom he said he had long had dealings and in whose ability and integrity he had the highest confidence. He wished him and his vessel every success. Captain Moir, who amongst his other good qualities appears to possess the virtue of modesty in a very high degree, briefly returned thanks.

*The “Ladies,” the “Shipping Interest,” the “Town and Trade of the Towns of Banff and Macduff,” and a number of other toasts and sentiments were afterwards given and most cordially responded to, and a very pleasant hour was thus spent in wishing success to the good ship ‘Mary’, which any owner, captain, or port may well be proud of. We observe that **Messrs Watson** have another vessel pretty well advanced; and as the **Messrs Geddie** have also one well forward. It is thus evident that shipbuilding is still one of the most important industries of Banff; and our wish is that it may long continue to be so.”*

1894, 24th December: Lloyd’s List reported as follows: **‘MARY.’** – London, Dec. 24. – Advices from Orkney state that during the gale the schooner **‘Mary’**, of Banff, went ashore at the west side of Kirkwall Harbour. The gale had abated yesterday, and the **‘Mary’** was towed into Kirkwall last night, supposed not seriously damaged.”

1984, 29th December: **“THE ORKNEY ISLANDS.** A terrific gale of northerly wind suddenly swept over Orkney on Saturday morning, and continued to rage for about nine hours. When it was at its height the schooner **‘Mary’**, of Banff, which was anchored in Kirkwall Bay, began to drift, and ran for shelter to the harbour, but missed and was brought up outside the west pier. By the aid of people on shore the vessel was made fast there, however, and after the gale abated she was got safely into the harbour. The damage sustained was not serious...”

Mary (1875). (Continued).

Vessel Name(s)	Mary.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	31 st September 1875.
Owner(s)	Alexander Robertson, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 73897.
GRT	110 tons.
Length	86.2 feet (26.27m).
Breadth	21.5 feet (6.55m).
Depth	10.3 feet (3.14m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	By 1894: She was owned by A. Wilson, Macduff.
Date Scrapped / Lost	<p>1900, 18th December: On passage from Sunderland to Banff with a cargo of coal, she was driven ashore at Balmedie, Aberdeenshire. The crew abandoned ship in their own small boat, all hands were saved. See below for more information.</p> <p>1900, 22nd December: At a public auction held in the Stanley Hotel, Regent Quay, Aberdeen, the wreck, as she lay on the beach, including masts, gear, and sails attached, was sold for £29 to Mr Tough, of Belhelvie. Her cargo of coals was mostly washed out by the sea, but what remained sold for £3.</p> <p>Some of her remains can still be seen at the wreck site at low tide - National Grid Reference: NJ98101830.</p>

1900, 19th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“SCHOONER WRECKED NEAR BELHELVIE. CREW RESCUED BY AN ABERDEEN TRAWLER.** Early on Sunday morning, while the schooner **‘Mary’** (Captain Matheson), belonging to Mr Wilson, shipowner, Banff, was proceeding north on a voyage from Sunderland to Banff with a cargo of coals, she grounded on the sands about 1½ miles south of Belhelvie, and became a total wreck. The crew, four in number, after the vessel stranded, took to their boat, and were picked up about two hours afterwards by the steam trawler **‘North American’** (Captain Robert Cook), belonging to the North Line of trawlers at Aberdeen, and brought to Aberdeen.

NARRATIVE BY THE CREW. The crew state that the **‘Mary’** left Sunderland on Friday morning for Banff with a cargo of coals. On entering the North Sea they encountered a strong south-westerly wind, which, however, they found favourable owing to the fact that they were sailing

Mary (1875). (Continued).

in a northerly direction. All the sails were set, and the schooner made considerable speed, the sea being comparatively smooth. All went well until the schooner passed Girdleness, when the wind increased in force, and the captain, fearing that the vessel might be driven out to sea, turned the schooner's head towards the land, so as to get shelter from the wind, which at times assumed the proportions of a gale. Donmouth was passed safely, but while 'Mary' was sailing along Belhelvie coast she suddenly grounded on the sands about 1½ miles from the coastguard station at Belhelvie, and about a mile from the shore. Immediately on stranding the vessel sprang a leak, and began to fill rapidly. Signals of distress were sent up, and in a short time the coastguards from Belhelvie appeared on the scene with their life-saving apparatus. The rockets sent up by the coastguards however, unfortunately fell considerably short of the vessel. Seeing this, the crew got into their boat, but it was deemed advisable not to attempt to land on the sands, as the sea was somewhat choppy and the craft a very light one. About two hours afterwards a trawler hove in sight, and being attracted by the signals which were sent up, herded round to the rescue of the crew. The trawler turned out to be the 'North American', of Aberdeen (Mr Robert Cook, Union Grove, master). The crew of the schooner who had been dodging about in their little boat, were picked up and taken on board the trawler. On learning the state of matters, Captain Cook went as near the schooner as possible with the trawler, and then sent some of his crew on board to see if there was any possibility of towing the 'Mary' off the sands. The men immediately set to work at the pumps, but could make no headway, as the water was rushing in faster than it could be pumped out, and the forepart of the schooner was now under water. Seeing that it was hopeless to get the vessel off the sands, Captain Cook, after getting his crew on board, backed the trawler out to sea again, and then headed round, and made for Aberdeen. On reaching the Albert Basin, the crew of the 'Mary' were sent to the Sailors' Institute, James Street, where they were comfortably looked after by the superintendent, Mr R. Beveridge. The following are the names of the crew: - William Matheson, Macduff, captain; Alex. Innes, Banff, mate; John McPhail, Banff, seaman; and Ton Abalin, a Russin-Finn seaman. The schooner, which is a small vessel of 99 tons gross, was built in Banff about 25 years ago. The vessel is insured. Great praise is due to Captain Cook for his gallant rescue of the shipwrecked seamen, and had there been any possibility of taking the vessel off, the trawler would have done so, because she is regarded as one of the most powerful vessels at the port. The seamen were fortunate in saving all their effects. The captain and Mr Marr, Marischal Street, the local broker, proceeded to the vessel on Sunday, but it was seen that the craft had become a total wreck."

Mary (1875). (Continued).

Several other local newspapers reported on the grounding of the '**Mary**', but not reporting as detailed as above, however, it was also mentioned that her cargo of coals were designated for Mr William Robertson, Banff, the managing owner was Captain Wilson, Banff harbourmaster, and that the vessels logbook was saved.

John Watson (1875).

She was built to carry general cargo.

1875, 11th June: The Buchan Observer and East Aberdeenshire Advertiser reported as follows: *"At Messrs Watson's yard, there was launched on Saturday one of the finest vessels ever built in Banff. She is named the **John Watson**, and is 110 feet keel, 26 feet breadth of beam, and 12 feet 7 inches depth of hold. She is classed A1 for 10 years, is 220 tons gross, is intended for the Mediterranean trade, and is to be commanded by Capt. Storm, late of the '**Agnes M. Gordon**'. The christening was performed Mrs Steele, wife of the principal owner."*

Vessel Name(s)	John Watson.
Rig	Schooner, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	5 th June 1875.
Owner(s)	George Steele , Seafield Street, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 69896.
GRT	221 tons.
Length	112.9 feet (34.41m). 100 feet (30.48m) at keel.
Breadth	25.3 feet (7.71m).
Depth	12.8 feet (3.90m).
Construction	Wood, French oak and pitch pine, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 10A1.
Other information	Master – Captain R. Storm.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1879, 23rd November: While discharging cargo at Timaru Bay, South Island, New Zealand, the vessel was driven ashore on a reef off Bloody Jack's Point and sank shortly afterwards in 20 fathoms of water, 10 miles off Waimate. No lives were lost. Master - Captain R. Storm.

Olivia (1875).

She was built to carry general cargo, and is known to have carried Wallsend coals to Banff.

I could not find a press launch article for this vessel.

Vessel Name(s)	Olivia.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	5 th May 1875.
Owner(s)	Alexander Robertson , Macduff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 69894.
GRT	80 tons.
Length	74 feet (22.56m).
Breadth	19.2 feet (5.85m).
Depth	9.3 feet (2.83m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. LR Surveyor: Thomas W. Kettle.
Other information	Signal letters: NVGJ.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1885, 16th January: She was wrecked while making for Sunderland Harbour in ballast at 5 pm, when she stuck on the Bar and went ashore behind the South Pier and went to pieces. The crew of five were saved by the Life Brigade using the rocket apparatus. Master was William Callum, and owners the Macduff Commercial Company.

1885, 20th January: The Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette reported as follows: *“SALE OF THE ‘OLIVIA’. — The ‘Olivia’, a schooner of 74 tons register, belonging to Banff, which was wrecked near the South Pier on Friday night, was sold yesterday Mr A. T. Crow, acting under instructions received from Mr Thompson Shields, of Sunderland (agent to the Underwriters.) There was a large attendance, about 1,000 people being present. Bids were brisk, and as a consequence the whole ship, or rather what remained of her, was sold. Portions of the hull which had been reduced to matchwood were sold to Mr Hold, who gave £10 for one lot and to Mr Weston for £6. Messrs Lamb and Sons purchased the anchors and chains for £19; the sale realising a total of £55. Mr Crow will sell the wreckage of the ‘Lady Ann Duff’, another Scotch schooner wrecked last week, on Wednesday.”*

Olivia (1875). (Continued).

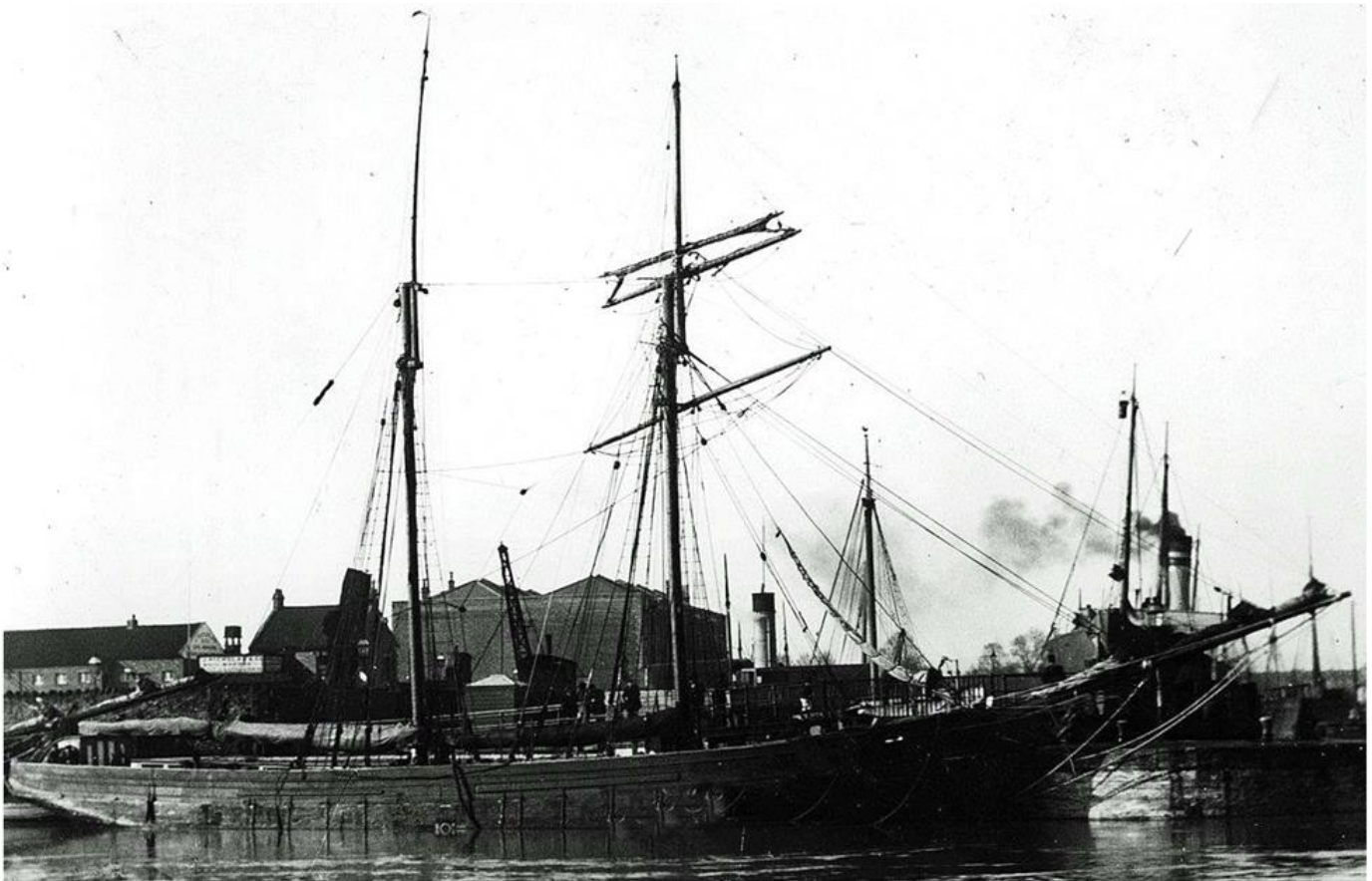
SCHOONER FOR SALE AT MACDUFF.
 For Sale, by Private Bargain,

THE **SCHOONER** "OLIVIA" of **Banff**, with Stores, &c., as she presently lies in the Harbour of Macduff. Was very strongly built for the present Owners by Messrs Watson & Son, **Banff**, in May 1875, and classed A1 Nine years; passed half-time survey in 1880; is salted. Dimensions—74 by 19·2 by 9·35. Registered tonnage, 74. Is in excellent order. Apply to **ALEX. ROBERTSON**, Bank Agent, or **WM. CALLUM**, Shipmaster.
Macduff, 23rd January 1882.

Schooner 'Olivia' advertisement for sale in the Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser, 31st January 1882.

Water Lily (1876).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded initially to the Baltic countries of Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Poland and Russia. Her cargoes outward bound included barrels of salted herring and oil cake (used as animal feed or fertilizer), inwards timber and grain. From 1887 she traded predominately between Ireland and South Wales but also between ports of N.W. and S.E England, and Lisbon (Portugal) carrying raw materials and grains.



Schooner, '**Water Lily**'. (Photographer unknown).

1876, 1st February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *"BANFF LAUNCH. — On Saturday last, there was launched from the Building Yard of Messrs John Watson & Son, Banff, very trim, finely finished schooner. The weather being fine, a large number of spectators assembled on the Braeheads, on the quay, and on every available point on the vessels in the harbour, to witness the interesting event. Shortly after one o'clock, everything being in readiness, Miss Cormack, Wick, eldest daughter of the owner, gracefully performed the ceremony of naming the vessel, and the '**Water Lily**' dashed prettily into the water amid the cheers of the assembly. The launch was entirely successful. The '**Water Lily**' is a schooner of graceful lines, and, like all Messrs Watson's work, is thoroughly well finished. The length of the vessel is 81 feet; breadth of beam, 21 feet 6 in.; depth of hold, 10 feet 4 in.*

Water Lily (1876). (Continued).

The gross tonnage is 109. The 'Water Lily' is classed 9 years A1 at Lloyds. The vessel will be commanded by Capt. Williamson, late of the 'Pioneer.' After the launch, a number of ladies and gentlemen met in the loft near the building yard, where wine and cake were liberally dispensed. The chair was occupied by Capt. Sutherland, Portsoy, and Mr James Gray, Macduff, was croupier. The usual loyal and patriotic toasts having been given and duly honoured, Captain Sutherland gave in very appropriate terms success to the 'Water Lily.' The toasts of the owners, builders, Capt. Williamson, who is to command the vessel, etc., etc., were also given and received with cheers. The whole proceedings passed off very much to the satisfaction of all concerned."

Vessel Name(s)	Water Lily
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	29 th January 1876.
Owner(s)	Donald Georgeson , Wick.
Registered Port	Wick. Official No.: 70521.
GRT	110 tons. (99 tons net).
Length	86.4 feet (26.33m).
Breadth	21.6 feet (6.58m).
Depth	10.3 feet (3.14m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Her hull was sheathed in felt and yellow metal.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. LR Surveyor: Thomas W. Kettle.
Other information	1883: Still registered at Wick, owner G. Georgeson, and master G. Williamson (LRS). 1887: Owned by William J. Shore, Runcorn, Cheshire. 1888: Owned by John and Alice Howard, Runcorn, and registered at Liverpool. 1892: Owned by Benjamin O'Connor, Bantry, Ireland. 1894: Owned by Patrick Driscoll, Bantry, Ireland. 1900: Owned by Timothy Driscoll, Sherkin Island, Co. Cork, Ireland. 1902, November: While sitting at anchor in the harbour of refuge, Outer Roads, Holyhead, Wales the schooner ' Kattie Darling ' of Cardigan collided with her. 1909: Owned by Harry C. Chugg, Braunton, North Devon.

Water Lily (1876). (Continued).

Other information (Continued)	1914, 6th December: She grounded at Abersoch, Wales during a storm, Captain H. C. Chugg and her crew were rescued by the Abersoch lifeboat. She was later refloated. 1914: Registered at Barnstaple.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1917, 10th September: On passage from Runcorn, Cheshire to Cherbourg, France with a cargo of coal, she was captured by German submarine 'UC-51' about 8 miles NE from Pendeen Lighthouse, Cornwall, and subsequently sunk with bombs. Wreck location: 50° 18'N, 5° 40'W, 8 miles NE of Pendeen Lighthouse, Cornwall.

There is more information regarding this vessel online in a report written by Gareth J.S. Davies in May 2021 for the Nautical Archaeology Society / Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit.

www.madu.org.uk



Schooner on Banff Harbour Patent Slip, date unknown. (Bremner, Banff).

Fair Wind (1876).

1876, 27th September: The Aberdeen Journal reported as follows: **“DISTRICT NEWS. BANFF LAUNCH.** — *On Wednesday afternoon there was launched from the building-yard of Mr John Watson, at the harbour, a fine schooner of 156 tons. The vessel’s dimensions are 92 feet keel, 10 feet 11 inches depth of hold, and 23 feet 8 inches beam. The schooner is coppered, and is mostly built of native timber from the wood of Montcoffer. Her classification is 9 years A1 at Lloyds. The vessel is intended to be employed in the Mediterranean and Baltic trade, and is to be commanded by Captain Masson, formerly of the ‘Flower of Banff’. As the schooner left the ways she was named the ‘Fair Wind’, by Miss Storm, daughter of Captain Storm, instead of by Mrs Masson, the wife of the captain, who is in delicate health. The ‘Fair Wind’ was built upon the patent slip, and as there is only a slight incline towards the water, the vessel moved off very slowly, and stuck about half-way down the ways. A couple of strong ropes were attached to the schooner, but all efforts to move her proved fruitless. It is expected, however, that the vessel will be fully launched at next tide.”* She got stuck on the ways due to the patent slip wheels being seized. She got off the same day at midnight.

Vessel Name(s)	Fair Wind.
Rig	Schooner, probably 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	20 th September 1876.
Owner(s)	Alexander Watson, Banff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 73908.
GRT	156 tons.
Length	98.3 feet (29.86m). (92 feet (28.04m) at keel).
Breadth	23 feet, 8 inches (7.24m).
Depth	10 feet, 11 inches (3.33m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Her hull was sheathed in copper.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	1883: Owned by George Steele, Banff. 1890: Owned by John Walker Simpson, Banff. By 1902: Recorded as 137 net tons.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1903, 10th September: On passage from Macduff for Stettin with a cargo of barreled salt herrings, she stranded at Nedingnen, near Gothenburg, Sweden. The master lost his life, all other hands were saved. 1,340 barrels of salt herring were salvaged fetching £1,200 while the wrecked hull, sold in situ, made only £180.

Fair Wind (1876). (Continued).

1876, 11th October: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: *“The fine new schooner, ‘Fair Wind’, which was launched a short time ago from the building yard of Messrs Watson, sailed on Saturday for Blyth, under the command of Captain Masson. A large number of persons assembled on the pier to give the ship and crew a valedictory cheer. The weather was very fine and the schooner sailed up and down the bay for a considerable time with a large number of persons on board, who were afterwards taken back to the harbour in boats.”*

1903, 16th September: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: **“WRECK OF A BANFF SCHOONER. DEATH OF THE CAPTAIN - A NATIVE OF PORTSOY.** *On Friday night a telegram was received at Portsoy intimating briefly the death of Captain James Smith and the loss of the schooner ‘Fairwind’, of Banff, of which vessel he was in command. The sad news was received with sincere regret throughout the town, of which Captain Smith was a much respected native. The ‘Fairwind’ left Macduff on 2nd September with a cargo of herrings for Stettin. The vessel, which got caught in Thursday's gale, was stranded at Midingen, near Gothenburg, in Sweden, and became a total wreck. From intelligence now to hand, it appears that Captain Smith perished through exhaustion. The other members of the crew were landed safely. Over a dozen other vessels were lost in the vicinity of Gothenburg, which shows that the gale in which the ‘Fairwind’ was lost must have been exceptionally severe. The ‘Fairwind’, one of the last of the fleet of schooners belonging to Banff, was built in 1876, was 135 tons register, and was owned by Mr John W. Simpson and others. Captain James Smith, who has thus been suddenly cut off at the comparatively early age of 44 years, was, as we have already indicated, a native of Portsoy, being the eldest son of the late **Mr James Smith, shipbuilder,** and Mrs Smith, of Boyndie Cottage, Chapel Street. After leaving school he took to a seafaring life, and served his apprenticeship on board the ‘**Baroness of Strathspey**’, then engaged in the coasting trade. At the early age of 21 he succeeded in gaining a master's certificate. He subsequently underwent two voluntary examinations, gaining certificate as extra master, and also one for competency in steam. The first vessel he sailed in as master was the ‘**Volunteer**’, of Banff. He afterwards had command of several large Glasgow vessels, and traded in all parts of the world. It is worthy of mention that during the time he was master of the ‘**Volunteer**’ he saved the crew of a French ship. For his bravery on this occasion, he received public recognition at the hands of the French Republic, having been presented with a silver medal and a diploma. Another incident which illustrates his fearlessness, bravery, and resource in the time of danger and emergency may be here referred to. While on a voyage round Cape Horn, his ship, the ‘**Ben Nevis**’, sprung a leak. It happened that the carpenter of the vessel was unwell at the time, and Captain Smith undertook to repair the damage, if possible. He accordingly had himself lowered over the side of the vessel, and at the risk of his life successfully plugged the hole. By this brave act he was the means of saving the ship and crew. Unfortunately, however, he received such injuries in performing the work as laid him aside for a considerable time.*

Fair Wind (1876). (Continued).

Captain Smith afterwards joined the barque 'Macduff', of Glasgow, but had the misfortune when assisting the crew to slip on the deck and injure his knee. He was invalided home for a long time. On his recovery, about a year ago, he joined the 'Fairwind', of Banff, on which he met his death. Captain Smith was much liked by all with whom he came in contact, his kindly and genial disposition gaining for him many friends. His loss is mourned by a wide circle. For his widowed mother and the remaining members of the family the sincerest sympathy is being expressed in their sore bereavement."

1903, 19th September: The Dundee Evening Post reported as follows: "**WRECKED SCOTTISH CREW. ARRIVE HOME TO-DAY.** The crew of the Scottish schooner 'Fairwind', of Macduff, which was wrecked in the storm in the Baltic while proceeding to Stettin with cured herrings, were landed today at Grimsby by the Wilson liner 'Orlando', and proceeded to their homes in Scotland. Mr J. Smith, captain the 'Fairwind', succumbed to exposure before help arrived."

1903, 22nd September: The Banffshire Journal reported as follows: "**WRECK OF THE BANFF SCHOONER FAIRWIND. RETURN HOME OF SURVIVING CREW.** The surviving members of the crew of the 'Fairwind', belonging to Banff, which went ashore on the Swedish coast, as reported in last issue returned to their homes in Banff, Macduff, and Portsoy on Saturday; and in an interview with one of the crew yesterday we elicited the following details about the loss of the vessel. The 'Fairwind', a schooner of 135 tons register left Macduff on 2nd inst. with a cargo of 1497 barrels of herrings for Stettin. Mr J. Smith (46), Portsoy, was master of the vessel; and the crew were: - Willaim Angus (50), Banff, mate; Neil Macleod (48), Macduff; Thomas McLauchlan (39), Macduff; John Adamson (41), Portsoy; C. Smith (19), Copenhagen; and Robert Callum (18), Macduff (apprentice). The ship, under a strong south-east wind, made a good passage across the North Sea. On Saturday and Sunday (the 5th and 6th) the wind blew from the north west, and, passing up the Skager Rack of the "Sleeve", as it is known by, all went well. On Monday morning the Skaw was passed, and the ship had a favourable wind whilst proceeding up the Cattegat. On Wednesday morning the wind veered round to the south-south-west, and as the day lengthened it increased in force. By this time the vessel was half-way between the Skaw and Elsinore, and it was encountering the full force of the wind, which had now sprung into, not a gale, but a complete hurricane, accompanied by a tremendous deluge of rain which fell like "smoke". On Wednesday night the two lights on the Niddigens island, which is about fifteen miles south of Winga, the entrance to Gothenburg, were sighted, and such was the force of the wind that the ship could not "stay". Several attempts were made, but in vain, and about four o'clock on Thursday morning the vessel was driven on the rocks near one of the lighthouses on the island. The island is about 300 yards long and about 100 yards wide, and the rocks project out to the sea for a considerable distance under the water. About half-an-hour after the ship had struck it began to break up, and the

Fair Wind (1876). (Continued).

hopes of the crew of ever reaching land were faint. The rocks had pierced seven or eight feet through the bottom of the vessel, and the waves dashed over it with great fury, making it unsafe for the crew to remain on deck. The first to make a move was Callum, the apprentice, who, divesting himself of part of his clothing, strapped a life-belt round his waist, and at great risk plunged into the water. He made for the direction of the lighthouse, but with the strong current he was carried a considerable distance out of the route. He got to the lighthouse, however, very much exhausted. Seeing that he was safely landed. Macleod also took to the water, and he was shortly afterwards followed by McLaughlan, both of whom reached the lighthouse in safety. The rest of the crew remained on board, three of them taking what shelter there was to be found in the fore-castle, which was partly full of water. The captain, however refused to go below, lest the vessel might heave over, and he died on the deck were landed today at Grimsby by the Wilson liner 'Orlando', and proceeded to their homes in through exhaustion and exposure to the terrific rain and wind. The storm had moderated somewhat by Friday morning, and about five o'clock the rest of the crew were taken from the ship to the lighthouse in a small boat. There they, like the three who had preceded them, were treated with every kindness by the two keepers. A Swedish Customs boat on Friday arrived on the scene, and Angus, Macleod, and Callum were taken on board and landed at Goatscar, a port seven miles north of Gothenburg. The rest of the crew remained at the lighthouse until a salvage boat took them to Goatscar, and they along with the others were afterward taken to Gothenburg in a steamboat sent for them by the British Consul. The salvage boat managed to secure about 200 barrels of herring, but the crew lost all their clothing save what happened to float to the surface of the water. Captain Smith's body was removed to Gothenburg, and was taken charge of by the British Consul. The crew were cared for in the Sailors Home, where they remained till Wednesday last, when they left for Grimsby on board one of the Wilson liners named 'Orlando'. They arrived at Grimsby on Friday morning, and were sent to their homes in the North, where they arrived on Saturday forenoon, by the agent for the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society. Captain Smith's remains left Gothenburg on Friday afternoon and arrived at Leith on Sunday morning. Thence, deceased's brother, Mr George Smith, accompanied the remains to Portsoy, where they arrived yesterday morning. A large number of friends waited the arrival of the 9.57 a.m. train, and followed the coffin to the deceased's home, Boyndie Cottage, Chapel Street. The funeral is to take place from there to Portsoy Churchyard at 1.30 p.m. today. The relatives of Captain Smith appreciate very much the kindness and attention shown by Mr Duff, British Consul, and the people of Gothenburg generally, in looking after the body and seeing it dispatched. The crew who were saved appreciated in an equally high degree the kindness of the Consul and of those who cared for them in Sweden."

Victoria (1876).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo.

1876, 30th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"BANFF — NEW VESSEL.** — *There was launched from the building yard of Messrs John Watson & Son, shipbuilders at Banff Harbour, on Thursday, a schooner which is owned at, and is to trade from the port. The new vessel is 99 tons register, and is classed A1 at Lloyds for ten years. Her dimensions are — 82 feet of keel, 21 feet beam, and 10¼ feet depth of hold. Mrs Henry Munro performed the ceremony of naming the vessel 'Victoria'. Mr Munro, rope and sailmaker, is managing owner, and the 'Victoria' will be commanded by Captain J. Munro. A number of ladies and gentlemen met after the launch, when wine and cake were served. Mr H. Munro, who presided, proposed success to the 'Victoria', and the number of toasts were given appropriate to the occasion. Messrs Watson have another vessel on the stocks."*



Henry Munro (1840 to 1919)
Provost of Banff.
(Photographer unknown).

1895, 17th December: The Banffshire Journal reported as follows: **"BANFF.** — *General satisfaction will be felt in Banff as well as along the coast, at the news received yesterday of the arrival in port of the schooner 'Victoria' of Banff, which left Banff on Monday 2nd inst. For Grangemouth. The schooner, which was built at Banff in 1876, and stands 98 tons net, and belongs to Henry Munro, Ropewalk Cottage, was a fortnight on the voyage, and as during that time heavy weather was experienced along the coast, in some minds uneasiness was felt at the vessel not having been heard of sooner. The feeling of disquiet was all the more keen that most of the crew belonged to the district, the captain, Mr L. Jack, belonging to Portsoy, and three of the others to Banff. Happily, as stated, the vessel arrived at Grangemouth yesterday, having been delayed and thrown out of her course by strong contrary winds."*

1897, 19th January: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **"DAMAGE TO BANFF SCHOONER.** *The schooner 'Victoria', of Banff from Guernsey with a cargo of stones, passed Gravesend for Deptford Creek about ten o'clock on Sunday forenoon in tow of the fish carrier 'Columbia', of Hull, with her bowsprit carried away and stem and port bow damaged. The captain of the 'Victoria' reported that his vessel had been in collision about seven o'clock that morning with the steamer 'Eastbourne', of London, which was proceeding to the Tyne. After the collision, he further stated, the latter vessel proceeded on her course. No arrangement had been made with the 'Columbia'.*

Victoria (1876). (Continued).

1897, 8th September: The Shields Daily Gazette reported as follows: *“The schooner ‘Victoria’, of Banff, from Middlesbrough, laden with railway chairs, was assisted into Ramsgate on Monday night having lost sails.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Victoria.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Yard No.	43.
Launch Date	25 th May 1876.
Owner(s)	Henry Munro , rope and sail maker, Banff. (Provost of Banff from 1896 to 1902).
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 73903.
GRT	108 tons.
Length	86.5 feet (26.36m). 82 feet at keel (25.00m).
Breadth	21.7 feet (6.61m).
Depth	10.3 feet (3.14m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Her hull was sheathed in felt and yellow metal.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 10A1.
Other information	1883: Owned by Henry Munro, Banff, master A. King. 1897, 18th February: The Banffshire Advertiser reported as follows: <i>“SALE OF SCHOONER. — The schooner ‘Victoria’ of Banff has been sold privately by Provost Munro, Banff to a shipmaster in Brompton on Severn, Gloucester. The ‘Victoria’ was built in 1876 at the Banff slip by Mr John Watson, and was <u>ninety-nine tons</u> registered.”</i> By 1900: Owned by William Cook, Frampton-on-Severn. By 1904: Owned by Frank Nurse, Commercial Road, Gloucester.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1911, 16th February: The Dundee Courier reported as follows: <i>“BANFF SCHOONER MISSING. The following vessel, which has been reported overdue, was yesterday posted at Lloyd's as missing: — ‘Victoria’, schooner, of Banff, official number 73903, Harper master, which sailed from Ballmacurra, County Cork, for Dublin, on the 15th December 1910, with a cargo of malt.”</i> At this date she was owned by Frank Nurse, Gloucester, her master was captain Ralph Harper, and she carried a crew of 4 or 5 men.

Elizabeth (1877).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo.

1877, 27th September: The John o' Groat Journal reported as follows: **“ADDITION TO THE TONNAGE AT THE PORT.** — *There was launched from the building-yard of Messrs Watson, at Banff Harbour, Thursday last, a finely modelled schooner, of 85 tons gross. The vessel is 72 feet in length, has 20 feet of beam, and 9 feet 4 inches of depth of hold. The owners are James Stephen, flesher, Wick, and George Sinclair, late of the ‘Inchbroom’, captain of the vessel. The launch was successfully accomplished. Thereafter a company of ladies and gentlemen were entertained at cake and wine in the loft at the building yard. Mr Henry Munro, ropemaker, occupied the chair, and Mr Alexander Watson, shipbuilder, was croupier. Toasts suitable to the occasion were proposed, including success to the ‘Elizabeth’.*”

Vessel Name(s)	Elizabeth.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	20 th September 1877.
Owner(s)	James Stephen, Flesher, Wick.
Registered Port	Wick. Official No.: 70527.
GRT	86 tons.
Length	79 feet (24.08m).
Breadth	20 feet (6.10m).
Depth	9.2 feet (2.80m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.
Other information	By 1900: Owned by Angus Munro, Tain. By 1904: Owned by W. Main, master his son Alexander Main, Inverness.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1905, circa 5th January: On passage from Sunderland to Tain, she was lost during a gale. See below for more information.

1905, 4th February: The Northern Scot and Moray & Nairn Express reported as follows: **“LOSS OF A FINDHORN VESSEL. Five Men Drowned.** *The safety of the schooner ‘Elizabeth’ has for some time caused considerable anxiety in the Findhorn district, and now the vessel has been given up as lost. She belonged to Captain William Main, Findhorn. The ‘Elisabeth’ left Sunderland for Tain on December 26th with a cargo of coals, and was last seen off Buchanness, when she was hailed by a trawler on January 5th, and all was reported well. She had evidently encountered several of the strong gales which blew about this time, as between her departure from Sunderland until spoken to by the trawler there was a good deal of anxiety concerning her. No more has been heard of her since the date mentioned, and it is now conjectured that she foundered in the fierce gale of January 5th, carrying her crew of five with her. The schooner*

Elizabeth (1877). (Continued).

was commanded by Captain Alex. Main (26), a son of the owner. He had laid up his own ship, the 'Contest', at Tain, and under-taken a voyage on the 'Elizabeth', to relieve his father. The mate, John Main (28) was also a son of the owners, and was married only four months ago, and had not even occupied his own house in Findhorn. John Wright (24), an A. B. S., was also a native of Findhorn, as was James Cameron, a boy of 16, Roderick Macdonald (28), also an A.B.S., was a native of Thurso. The schooner, on which Capt. W. Main had sailed and master for twelve years, was only partly insured. Widespread sympathy expressed for the friends and relatives of the unfortunate Seaman, and a great gloom has been cast over the village by the sad occurrence."

A.B.S. – Able Seaman.

Victor (1877).

She was built to carry general cargo and intended for the Baltic and Mediterranean trades.

1877, 19th June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **"LAUNCH AT BANFF.** – *There was launched from Mr Watson's shipbuilding yard at Banff Harbour on Tuesday, a schooner of the following dimensions: - Length of keel, 86 feet; breadth of beam, 21 feet 8 inches; depth of hold, 10 feet 8 inches. The vessel is 123 tons gross, and has been classed at Lloyd's A1 for nine years. The day being very pleasant, a large number of the inhabitants attended to witness the launch, and as usual on such occasions the shipping in the harbour displayed their bunting, while flags also waved from the Coastguard Station. As the vessel left the ways she was gracefully christened 'Victor', by Miss Storm, daughter of Captain Storm, Banff. The 'Victor' is very handsomely built of oak and larch, and is intended for the Baltic and Mediterranean trades. She is fitted up in a substantial manner with all the newest appliances. After the launch, the vessel was moored at the Railway Jetty, where she will soon be finished and ready for sea. The owners of the 'Victor' are Captain Charles Taylor, Portsoy, and Mr Seebom, Sheffield. Captain Taylor is to be master. In the afternoon a cake and wine banquet was held in the Artillery Drill Hall, at which there was a numerous company. Captain Paterson, Wanford, occupied the chair, and the duties of the vice-chair were performed by Capt. Sutherland. The usual preliminary toasts having been given in happy terms from the chair, Mr John W. Simpson proposed the health of the builders, for whom Mr Alexander Watson appropriately responded. Mr Henry Munro, in suitable terms, gave 'Success to the Victor', a toast which was heartily received and cordially honoured. Captain Taylor replied. The toast list also included the Town and Trades of Banff, Macduff, and Portsoy. Mr H. Munro proposed the health of Miss Storm, and Mr George Steel acknowledged the compliment. Captain Sutherland gave the Ladies, and Captain J. W. Hay made a felicitous response. We observe that Mr Watson has almost finished the frame of a schooner of 82 tons gross, built to the order of Wick owners. He is also about to lay another keel in the place which the 'Victor' has vacated for Mr J. G. S. Longmore and Captain West."*

Further to the above, the Banffshire Reporter 15th June reported as follows: **"LAUNCH AT BANFF.** *On Tuesday a remarkably fine and very handsome schooner was launched from the*

Victor (1877). (Continued).


building yard of **Messrs Watson**, Banff. This vessel, as we have before stated, has been affirmed by those well able to judge to be the finest her builders have ever turned out, either as regards model, materials, or workmanship.....The launch took place between twelve and one o'clock.....This vessel will be commanded by our townsman, Captain Taylor, may be said to have a history of her own – a history that certainly reflects much credit on the captain and his co-owner. As we have heard that history it is simply this: Mr Seebohm, a gentleman belonging to Sheffield, while in delicate health had been a passenger – from Iceland we think – on board a vessel of which Captain Taylor had the command, and was so pleased with the attention and kindness shown him by the latter, that he has had the '**Victor**' built for him under terms which, to say the very least of them, exhibit an instance of gratitude and generosity combined but too seldom met with.....The '**Victor**', which is chiefly intended for the Mediterranean trade, will soon be ready for sea, and we trust that she may long "Walk the waters like a thing of life," and in her battle with wind and wave ever prove the victor, and thus maintain the prestige of her name."

Vessel Name(s)	Victor.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	12 th June 1877.
Owner(s)	Mr Seebohm , Sheffield.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 76565.
GRT	123 tons.
Length	90 feet (27.43m). Keel: 86 feet (26.21m).
Breadth	22.4 feet (6.83m).
Depth	10.6 feet (3.23m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Salted (LRS).
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1. Class 11A1 (LRS, 1883). ✠ Built under Special Survey. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine.
Other information	1877: Master , Charles Taylor, Portsoy. 1883: Owned by Seebohm, master Charles Taylor / Summers (LRS).
Date Scrapped / Lost	1893, 17th November: Missing. The Aberdeen Press and Journal - Tuesday 21 st November 1893, reported as follows: " <i>Supposed loss of a Portsoy Schooner off Scarborough. The name boards 'W. Embla' and 'Sylada' and the lid of a chest belonging to the schooner 'Victor', of Portsoy, were picked up off Scarborough yesterday.</i> "

Helen West (1878).

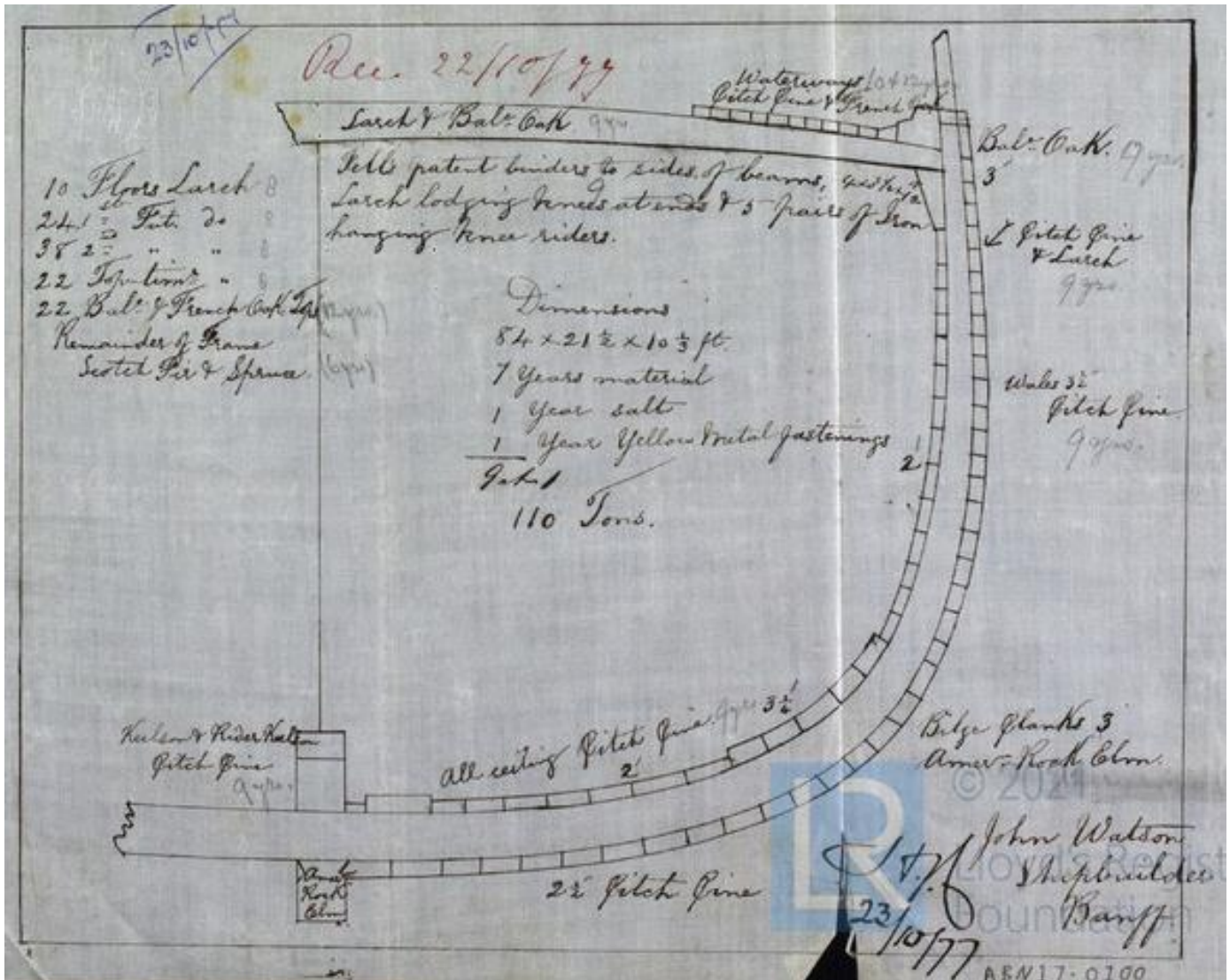
She was built to carry general cargo.

1878, 12th February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“LAUNCH AT BANFF HARBOUR. — There was launched from Messrs Watson’s shipbuilding yard at Banff Harbour, on Tuesday, a handsome schooner, built to order of Capt. West, late of the ‘Sovereign,’ and others. The day was fine, and as usual, a large assemblage gathered to see the launch. Bunting was displayed from the vessels in the harbour. As the schooner left the slip, she was christened the ‘Helen West’, the ceremony being performed by Mrs West, wife of the captain. The launch was very successful. The schooner is 99 tons register, 82 feet of keel, 21½ feet beam, 10 feet 5 inches depth of hold, and is classed A1 at Lloyd s for nine years. She is intended for the Baltic and coasting trade. Messrs Watson are well advanced with a schooner for Portsoy owners. They are also busily employed in repairing several of the ships laid up. There are at present twenty-three vessels in the harbour, representing a greater amount of tonnage than has ever before been in Banff harbour at one time.”*

Vessel Name(s)	Helen West.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Yard No.	47.
Launch Date	5 th February 1878.
Owner(s)	Andrew West, Macduff.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 76572.
GRT	99.9 tons (LRS).
Length	87 feet (26.52m). (82 feet at keel).
Breadth	21.6 feet (6.58m).
Depth	10.6 feet (3.23m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic oak, French oak, larch, pitch pine, Scotch pine, yellow pine, and spruce. Hull sheathed in yellow metal.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.  Built under Special Survey. Surveyor: Thomas W. Kettle. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. Her classification was based on 7-years for materials, 1-year for salting & 1-year for yellow metal fastenings.
Other information	By 1890: Owned by Mrs Jane Yell, Macduff. By 1890: Owned by A. Wilson, Banff. By 1894: Owned by William MacLean, Inverness.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1895, 10th October: She sprang a leak and was abandoned at sea off the Yorkshire coast. See below for more information.

Helen West (1878). (Continued).

1895, 22nd October: The Inverness Courier reported as follows: **“LOSS OF AN INVERNESS SCHOONER.** – News is to hand of the loss of the Inverness schooner, **“Helen West”**, belonging to Captain William Maclean, Attadale Road. She was on a voyage from Konigsberg to Poole, on the Yorkshire coast, laden with a cargo of grain, when she encountered very severe weather in the North Sea, and sprang a leak. The crew manned the pumps for three days and three nights without avail, and observing the water rapidly gaining upon his vessel, the captain determined to abandon her. His signals of distress were sighted by a foreign steamer, and some of the crew came to the rescue, and took the crew of five off the schooner. The men were conveyed to London, from whence they were dispatched to their respective destinations. The fishing steamer, **“Seestem”**, fell in with the derelict 15 miles north of the Horn’s Reef Lightship. The sea was over her deck. An attempt was made to take the schooner in tow, but owing to the high sea this proved futile. It can hardly be doubted that the **“Helen West”** ultimately foundered.”




Midship section of the 'Helen West'. (Courtesy Lloyds Register Foundation).

Lady of the Lake (1878).

She was built as a coaster to carry general cargo but had a very short life after being wrecked at only one year and nine months old.

John Watson built a vessel with the same name in 1867.

1878, 4th June: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: **“LAUNCH AT BANFF.** — Yesterday there was launched from the building yard of **Messrs John Watson & Co.,** at Banff Harbour, a fine clipper schooner of about 90 tons register. The vessel is of 74 feet keel, 20½ feet beam, 9½ feet in depth of hold. She is classed A1 at Lloyds for nine years. The weather being fine, the launch was witnessed by a large concourse of spectators, and was highly successful. The vessel was named the **“Lady of the Lake”** by Mrs Macdougall. The vessel is owned by Captain Macdougall and others, in Portsoy, and will be commanded by him. After the launch, a large company of ladies and gentlemen were entertained to cake and wine in one of the lofts near the building yard. Mr John Bremner, Portsoy, presided and Captain Paterson, Portsoy, was croupier. Success to the new vessel, and the health of the builders, and other appropriate toasts were cordially honoured.”

Vessel Name(s)	Lady of the Lake.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	3 rd June 1878.
Owner(s)	John Bremner, Portsoy.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 76575.
GRT	84.82 tons. (LRS).
Length	78.5 feet (23.97m).
Breadth	20.6 feet (6.28m).
Depth	9.4 feet (2.86m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 9A1.  Built under Special Survey. Surveyor: Thomas W. Kettle. A&CP: Anchors and cables proved at a public machine. Her classification was based on 7-years for materials, 1-year for salting & 1-year for yellow metal fastenings.
Other information	--
Date Scrapped / Lost	1880, 14th February: She was wrecked on the Isle of Jura during a gale. She had discharged her cargo of barley at Ardbeg and was bound for Ardrossan in ballast. All hands were saved.

Lady of the Lake (1878). (Continued).

1880, 17th February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“PORTSOY SCHOONER. - Last evening a telegram to Mr Bremner, manager of The Mills and managing owner of the vessel ‘Lady of the Lake,’ commanded by Captain McDougall, announces the total wreck of that vessel on the island of Jura. The vessel left Portsoy with a cargo of barley for Ardbeg, and having discharged, was bound for Ardrossan in ballast when overtaken by the gale, and put back to Towland-man's Bay, Jura. On Saturday the crew had to cut away the masts to ease the vessel riding at anchor, according to a previous telegram; but according to latest telegram this has proved ineffectual in saving the vessel. The crew are saved, and doing their utmost to save all they can. The vessel is only a year and nine months old, having been launched in Banff 1878, where she took in her first cargo in June same year. She took the place of the former ‘Lady of the Lake,’ which was lost in the Baltic in the winter of 1878, on which occasion Captain McDougall narrowly escaped. She is insured, and owned by Mr Bremner, Captain McDougall, and others. The master is one of the most energetic seamen in Portsoy, and no doubt will feel disappointed as well as suffer indirect loss in the wreck of his new vessel.”*

Summary of materials used on ‘Lady of the Lake’.

As lifted from her midship section.

Stem	British oak.
Stern Post	French oak.
Keel	Elm.
Keelson	Pitch pine.
Beams	Baltic oak and larch.
Hull planks	Pitch pine.
Sheer strake	French oak.
Deck	Yellow pine.
Other parts	Larch., some ash and beech.

Glenboyn (1878/79).

She was built to carry general cargo and is known to have traded at Portsoy, Banff, Peterhead, Sunderland, Shields, Gravesend, Swansea, Valparaiso (Chile), Leghorn (Italy), New York, Barbados, and Pernambuco (Brazil).

Vessel Name(s)	Glenboyn.
Rig	Barquentine, 3 masts, 1 deck, probably a round stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	11 th December 1878.
Owner(s)	John Bremner , Portsoy.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 79952.
GRT	227 tons.
Length	111.5 feet (33.99m).
Breadth	24.7 feet (7.53m).
Depth	12.4 feet (3.78m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class 11A1. ✠ Built under Special Survey.
Other information	<p>1881, 9th February: The Shields Daily Gazette, reported as follows: <i>“BURNING OF A LIVERPOOL SHIP. Intelligence received from Liverpool yesterday morning states that the iron barque ‘Frankfurt Hall’, of Liverpool, bound from the Mersey to Valparaiso with a cargo of coals, has been abandoned by fire at sea, in lat. 54 S, long. 63 W. The whole of the crew were taking off the burning vessel by the ‘Glenboyn’, and landed at Valparaiso.”</i></p> <p>1888, January: She was owned by John W. Simpson, Banff and other owners in Portsoy, and was put up for auction in the Fife Arms Hotel, Banff but there were no bidders. (She was later advertised for sale in Lloyds List 16th Feb 1888).</p> <p>1890: Master – Smith.</p>
Date Scrapped / Lost	<p>1891, 7th May: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: <i>“VESSELS MISSING OR OVERDUE. The following vessels, previously referred to as overdue, were posted at Lloyd’s yesterday as missing: - ...The ‘Glenboyn’, of Arklow, which left London for Swansea on the 16th February last, with a cargo of coal tar pitch, and passed Prawle Point on the 8th March, and has not since been heard of.”</i></p>

Glenboyn (1878/79). (Continued).

1878, 14th December: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“LAUNCH.** — *There was launched on Wednesday from **Messrs Watson’s** yard a schooner of 226 tons burden. She has been built for Messrs John Brenmer & Co., Portsoy, and is intended for the Mediterranean service. The vessel was christened the ‘**Glenboyn**’ by Mrs Farquharson.”*

1878, 19th December: The John o’ Groat Journal reported as follows: **“LAUNCH.** – *Last week there was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr John Watson, shipbuilder, Banff, a beautifully modelled three masted schooner of the following dimensions: - Length of keel, 105 feet, breadth of beam, 25 feet 7 inches, depth of hold, 12 feet 4 inches. She is built for Mr John Bremner, Portsoy. This is the fiftieth vessel which **Mr Watson** has built.”*


I make this the 53rd vessel built by **John Watson**, however the fiftieth vessel built at Banff, the first three being built at Whitehills.

1879, 28th January: The Aberdeen Press and Journal reported as follows: **“DEPARTURE OF A NEW VESSEL.** — *Yesterday afternoon, the wooden barkentine ‘**Glenboyn**’, 110 tons register, which was launched a few weeks ago from the yard of **Messrs J. Watson & Sons**, shipbuilders, Banff, sailed in ballast for Granton, where it is intended she shall load coals for Barbados. The vessel, which is a handsome looking craft, is commanded by Captain Farquharson. A large number of people assembled on the pier to witness the ship leave the harbour.”*

1885, 15th June: The Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette reported as follows: **“REFUSING TO PROCEED TO SEA.** – *At a J.P. Court held at Rothesay on Saturday – Captain H. Macfie and Provost Sharp on the bench – Henry Bollett and William MacDonald, seamen on board the brigantine ‘**Glenboyn**’, of Banff, were charged with having refused to proceed to sea. The vessel sailed from the Tail-of-the-Bank on Friday, bound for Barbados. She was under tow, and when the tug steamer was heaving off the prisoners jumped on board of her. The vessel then put into Rothesay Bay, and the two men were placed under arrest. The captain said he was perfectly willing to let the men resume duty, but this they refused, the only excuse offered by the prisoners being that if they proceeded there would be no peace in the ship. They were therefore sent to prison for four weeks each.”*

Glenboyn (1878/79). (Continued).

BARQUENTINE for SALE by private bargain.
Price very moderate.



THE Barquentine **GLENBOYN, of Banff,**
 as she presently lies in the Harbour of Banff.
 The Glenboyn was built at Banff for present owners
 in 1878, under special survey; is classed A1 for 11 years from De-
 cember, 1878; has just been remetalled at Banff, under Lloyd's
 Surveyor; is 227 tons gross register, 210 tons nett; carries 320 tons
 deadweight on 12 feet 6 inches draught of water; sails fast; shifts
 and tows without ballast.
 Vessel can be seen, and particulars learned, on application to
JOHN W. SIMPSON, Managing Owner.
Banff, Feb. 9, 1888.

Lloyd's List - Thursday 16th February 1888.

1888, 1st May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *"BANFFSHIRE VESSELS IN THE BALTIC - The sailing vessels belonging to Banff that trade to the Baltic have been unusually late in arriving at their destinations. Danzig was reached in the end of last week, about a month or six weeks later than usual. They have been detained by heavy masses of ice in the Cattegat (Kattegat), Sleeve, and Sound. The 'Glenboyn(e)' reached Danzig on Friday, being the first sailing vessel to arrive this season; and the 'Fleetwing', 'Andrew Longmore' and 'Deveron', on Saturday — the last two vessels having been nearly three weeks on the passage. The Cattegat and the Sleeve have during the past two months been more or less blocked with heavy masses of ice, and the Sound was literally frozen across. So close was the ice that one steamer received relief by the Danes walking to her from the Danish side on the ice, while Swedish fishermen walked to her on the ice from the Swedish side of the Sound. So far as known no damage has been received any of the vessels belonging to the port of Banff. Reports received from Denmark, Sweden, and the Baltic, state that the winter has been the most severe experienced there since 1838. Even yet the upper parts of the Baltic are completely blocked by ice, and the Sundavall district is not expected to be open for navigation before the month of June."*

The 'Glenboyn' (227 tons), 'Fleetwing' (111 tons), and 'Andrew Longmore' (135 tons) were all built by John Watson, Banff.

Bibliography

- 1 Various newspapers as mentioned within the book text.
- 2 Lloyds Register of shipping – various years.
- 3 Aberdeen Register of Shipping (Aberdeen City Archives).
- 4 Wooden shipbuilding by C. Desmond (1919).

Websites

www.electricscotland.com

‘The Shipbuilders of Aberdeen’. Free to download 20 volumes of Aberdeen shipbuilding books, videos, and shipbuilding poetry by the ‘Bard of the yard’ Stanley Bruce.

‘Banff and Macduff History’. Free to download 4 volumes of local history.

www.aberdeenships.com

Information on >3,000 Aberdeen built vessels.

www.clydeships.co.uk

Information on >40,000 Scottish built vessels.

Appendix A

1868 to 1870 Shipbuilding Returns NE Scotland.

1874, 29th August: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: *“SHIPBUILDING RETURNS. – A Parliamentary paper just issued shows the number and tonnage of vessels built at the various ports in the Kingdom during the past three years...”*

From this table it can clearly be seen that the city of Aberdeen was the major shipbuilding centre for the region, however Banff was clearly in second place.

Place	Year	No of vessels	Tonnage
Banff	1868	15 wood	2,639
	1869	9 wood	2,189
	1870	13 wood	2,282
Aberdeen	1868	3 iron	7,924
		10 wood	
		2 composite	
	1869	5 iron	9,691
		8 wood	
	1870	6 iron	6,305
4 wood			
2 composite			
Fraserburgh	1868	0	0
	1869	1 wood	253
	1870	1 wood	76
Peterhead	1868	8 wood	1,325
	1869	3 wood	625
	1870	6 wood	763
Inverness	1868	1 wood	196
	1869	3 wood	700
	1870	0	0

I assume since there wasn't a separate entry for Macduff, that any Macduff built vessels are included in the Banff numbers.

John Watson, Banff Harbour built 2 vessels in 1868, 2 in 1869 and 3 in 1870. (All schooners except for 1 brigantine).

William Geddie, Duffushillock, Banff built 2 schooners in 1868, 1 in 1869 and 2 in 1870.

The remaining numbers built, were probably smaller fishing boats or attributed to Macduff.

Appendix B

James Smith, builder of the 'Blossom'.

Blossom (1862).

This schooner was built to carry general cargo, and according to the press article below was built at 'Duffushillock' not at Banff Harbour. Duffushillock is the area of ground aside the shore across Church Street from the Old Kirkyard and north of Water Lane. The builder's signature on the LR report states **James Smith**, hence in Lloyd's Register of Shipping, **Smith** is recorded as the builder.

She is known to have traded at the Baltic.

1862, 6th May: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser reported as follows: ***"BANFF – LAUNCH.** – On Tuesday last, a very handsome schooner was launched from the stocks on Duffus Hillock, near the mouth of the Deveron at Banff. The owners are Messrs Bartlet, Paterson & Sons, Banff; and Messrs A & J Longmore, Rettie and Hilton., and she is to be commanded by Mr James Paterson jun. The contour of this vessel is very graceful. Her dimensions are: -Length of keel 72 feet; extreme breadth of beam 20 feet 9 inches; and depth of hold 11 feet. Her registered tonnage is 105, and in shape she is something between the old and the clipper builds. She has been built – by **Mr James Smith, sen.** Sandend – of the best of materials, under the personal inspection of Mr Paterson, sen., and has been named '**Blossom**' – the fourth vessel of that name which the Messrs Paterson have been owners. The ceremony of christening was performed by Miss Paterson with a gracefulness and accuracy of aim which elicited a perfect shower of applause from the delighted beholders. The launch was very successful, and if the good wishes and hearty cheers of the large assemblage who witnessed it can avail, this vessel will be as fortunate as were her namesake predecessors."*

1862, 2nd May: The Elgin Courant, and Morayshire Advertiser reported as follows: ***"LAUNCH OF THE 'BLOSSOM' OF BANFF.** – This fine vessel, built at Duffushillock by **Mr Watson**, was launched on Tuesday last. She is for Mr Paterson, Seatown, and is to be commanded by Mr James Paterson, his son, who was captain of the previous '**Blossom**', now sold. There have been a race of '**Blossoms**' in Banff, and keeping up of the name indicates that they have yielded fruit. Miss Paterson christened the vessel very gracefully."*

So, who built her, **Watson** or **Smith**, or was it a joint venture?

(**John** and **William Geddie**, shipbuilders, built vessels at Duffus Hillock from 1865 to 1879).

Appendix B (Continued).**Blossom (1862).**

Vessel Name(s)	Blossom.
Rig	Schooner, 2 masts, 1 deck, probably a square stern, and a standing bowsprit.
Launch Date	22 nd April 1862.
Owner(s)	Bartlet, Paterson & Sons , Banff, and A. & J. Longmore , Rettie and Hilton.
Registered Port	Banff. Official No.: 44379.
GRT	99 tons. (104 tons LRS).
Length	79 feet (24.08m). Length of keel: 72 feet (21.95m).
Breadth	20.7 feet (6.31m).
Depth	11 feet (3.35m).
Construction	Wood, carvel construction. Baltic oak, larch, yellow and red pine.
Figurehead	Unknown.
Classification	Lloyds Register of Shipping. Class: 6A1. LR Surveyor: William Wallis.
Other information	Master – James Paterson jnr. 1866 / 1868: Master, G. Wilson. By 1870: Owned by William Paterson, Banff. By 1880: Owned by Kenneth Finlayson, Applecross, Ross-shire. By 1890: Owned by Kenneth McRae, Balmacara, Ross-shire. By 1900: Owned by George Thomas Pollexfen, Sligo, Ireland.
Date Scrapped / Lost	1909: Register closed, fate unknown. At 37-years old she was probably scrapped.

Appendix C

John Strachan, the Oldest Shipwright in Banff (Watson Apprentice).

1914, 27th May: The Banffshire Reporter reported as follows: **“SUDDEN DEATH AT BANFF.** A sad incident occurred in Banff on Monday (25th). In the early hours of the morning, as he was preparing to leave home to commence his daily occupation, **Mr John Strachan, shipwright, Victoria Place,** collapsed on the floor and expired. On Saturday he was at work as usual, and, until within a few moments of his decease, he appeared to be in good health and spirits. Death is attributed to heart failure. **Mr Strachan,** who was 66 years of age, had been for the past 29 years employed by **Messrs Stevenson & Asher,** during the earlier part of that period at Macduff, and latterly at their boatbuilding yard at Banff harbour. He was probably the oldest **shipwright** in Banff, and served his apprenticeship as such with the late **Mr John Watson,** at the harbour yard. With justifiable pride, he was wont to recall the days when at the yard he took his part in constructing the beautiful sailing ships, once so numerous along the northern coast, but which have now almost entirely disappeared. **Mr Strachan** was well known as a skillful, intelligent, and thoroughly reliable and trusted workman, and was by many friends held in high esteem. He is survived by his widow and three sons and three daughters. Two of the sons are in America, and the other is in Devonport, while a daughter is at home and the others are married,”

Appendix D

“PRESENTATION OF A SWEDISH GOLD MEDAL TO CAPTAIN WATSON, BANFF.

1859, 15th February: The Banffshire Journal and General Advertiser.

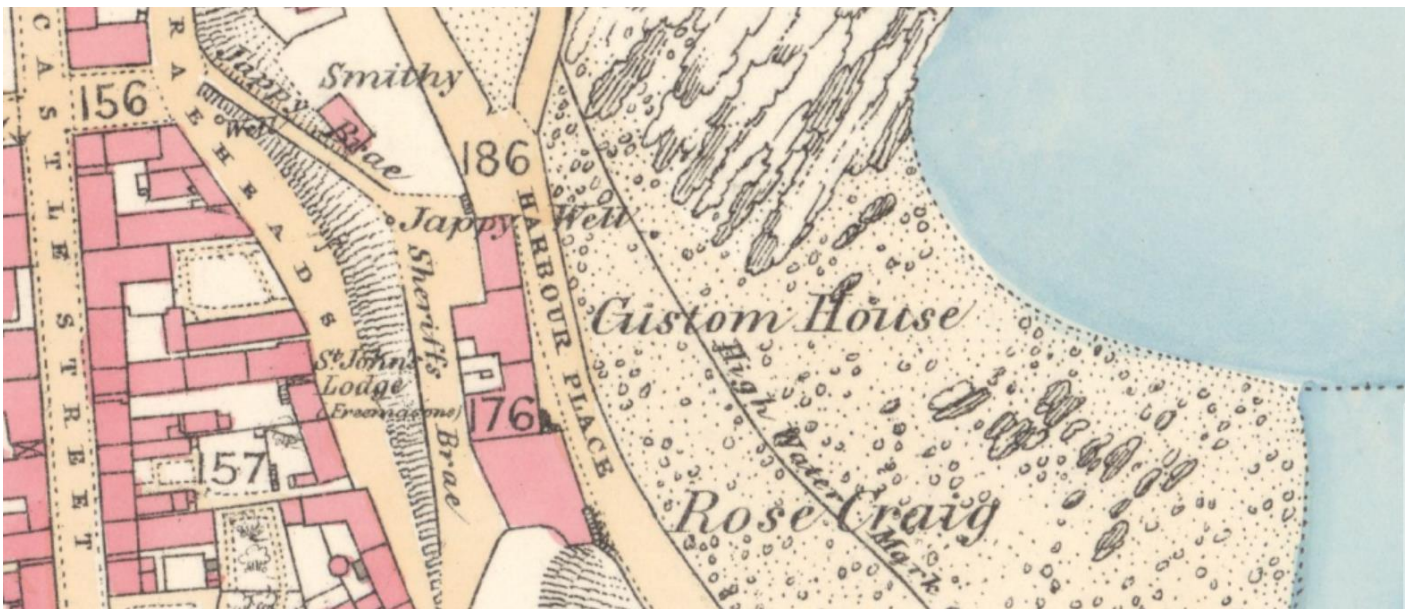
Captain Watson, of the schooner ‘Banffshire’, of Banff, having saved the lives of a Swedish crew, the Prince-Regent of Sweden sept, through his minister at the British Court, a gold medal as reward for this service. Count Platen, the Swedish minister, in transmitting it to Lord Malmesbury, writes as follows: -

My Lord, - Captain George Watson, commanding the English schooner ‘Banffshire’, of Banff, encountered, on the 26th September last, in the Cattegat, the Swedish Brig ‘Ulysse’, Captain Kahl, vainly beating against a great storm, and saved from imminent death the entire crew of the sinking ship. After having shown to the unfortunate men all the care which their sad condition required, he landed them all safe and sound at Elsinore. M. Enequist, British Vice-Consol at Wisby, proprietor of the ‘Ulysse’, having made several ineffectual attempts to induce Captain Watson to receive some token of gratitude for his generous conduct, has forwarded to the Government of the King a detailed account of the circumstances of the shipwreck; and M., the Prince-Regent, desirous that some worthy pledge of his lively satisfaction should be accorded to this mariner, has decreed to him a gold medal, bearing the likeness of the King his august father, and the inscription ‘Illis quorum meruere labores’, surrounding the name of the person for whom it is destined. In transmitting this medal to your Excellency, I am unable to forbear expressing how agreeable it is to me thus to render homage to the generous courage and humanity of an English sailor, who on this occasion has saved the lives of my countrymen. I am happy to be the organ of the sentiments of esteem and gratitude which the noble conduct of Captain Watson has inspired in my government. I profit by this occasion, etc. (Signed) PLATEN.

Lord Malmesbury sent the medal to the Board of Trade, who transmitted it to the Acting Collector of Customs here, requesting that the medal should be presented to Captain Watson ‘in such a manner as may best express the high sense entertained of his services’. The presentation accordingly took place yesterday at the Custom House. The ceremony of presentation was performed by Mr Charles Burridge, acting collector of customs, who expressed his sincere regret at the unavoidable absence, from indisposition, of Mr Bold, collector, who was to have performed the pleasing duty that had thus fallen to his lot to discharge. A number of Captain Watson’s friends were present to congratulate him on his well-merited award. Having read the letters, including the one we have noticed, and disposed of a few preliminary remarks, which the foregoing notice renders unnecessary here, Mr Burridge, addressing Captain Watson, said – I have very great pleasure, Sir, in being the medium of presenting to you this handsome testimonial of your noble conduct towards your fellow-men in distress, in name of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Sweden, the lives of

whose countrymen you have been the means of saving. Although I cannot give adequate expression to the pleasure I feel in conveying to you this medal, I trust it may prove as an incentive to further acts of humanity, not only on your part, but on the part of others who should be actuated by the same humane feelings, which, I am the more happy on this occasion to say, form one of the most prominent characteristics of our countrymen. No lengthened address is necessary. Allow me, Captain Watson, the very pleasing duty of appending to your person (suiting the action to the word) this gold medal, and I trust in Divine Providence you will be long spared to wear it; and (shaking hands) I heartily congratulate you as the recipient of such a token.

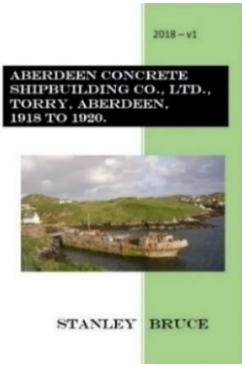
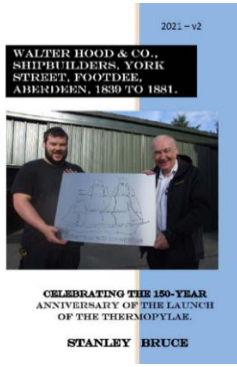
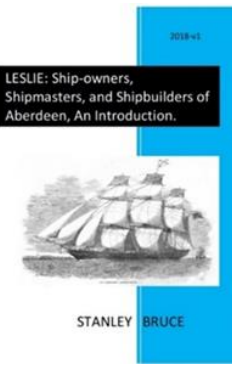
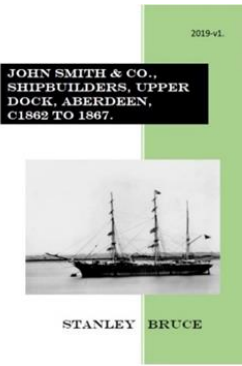


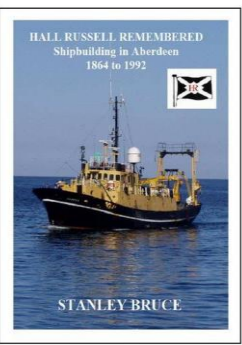
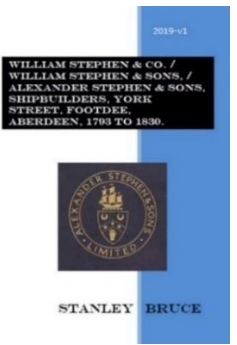
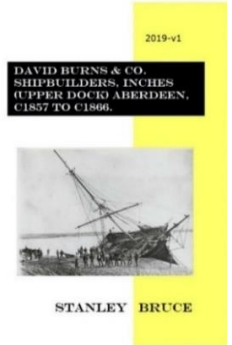
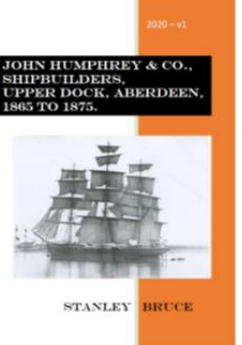
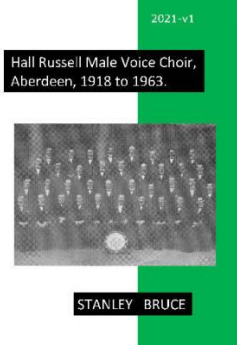
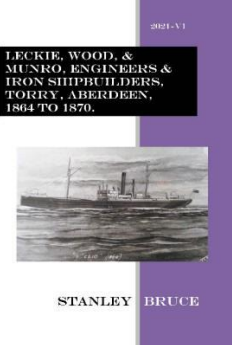
Captain Watson made a brief and suitable reply. After duly returning his hearty thanks for a gift so unexpected, he observed – What I did was only what any other shipmaster would do, or at least ought to do, for his fellow-creature in distress; and I hope I shall never be found standing aloof when there is life at stake, and when my services might be the means of preserving it. I do not know how soon I may be placed in the same dangerous circumstances myself; and I trust seamen will always have this consideration at heart when they see their fellows in danger. Captain Watson’s remarks were made with feeling although with firmness, and were received with approbation. A general round of congratulations closed the proceedings. The medal is exceedingly handsome and massive. It exhibits on the obverse, around the head of the King, the inscription – ‘Oscar Rex Sveciae Norwegiiae Goth et Vand.’; (Oscar II King of Sweden, Norway and the Goths (an ancient Germanic people), and on the reverse the name of Captain Watson – ‘Navarcho G. Watson’ – surrounded, as stated in Count Platen’s letter, by the inscription – ‘Illis quorum meruere labores.’” Which means “To those who have earned their labors.”



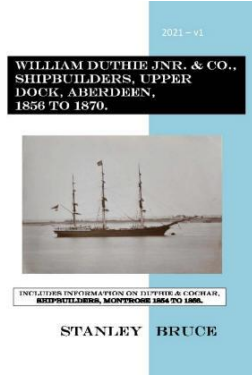
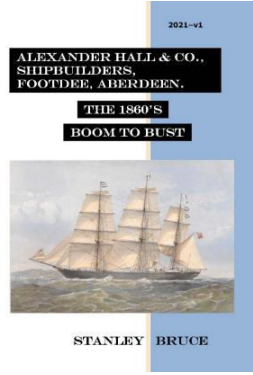
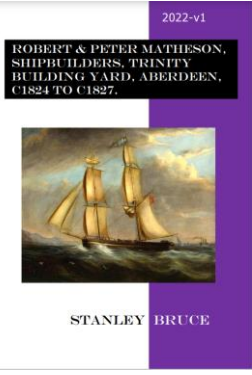
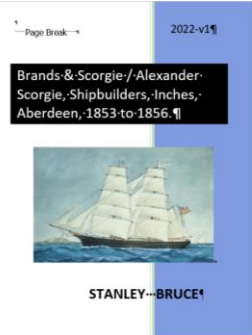
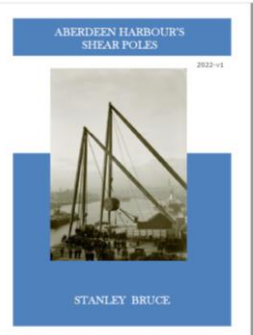
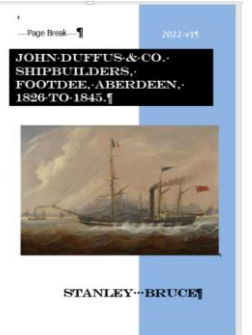
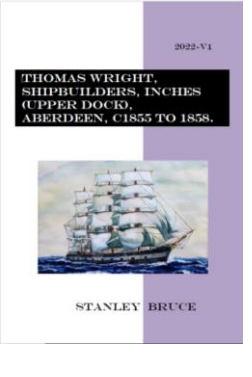
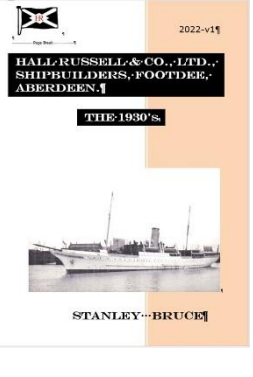
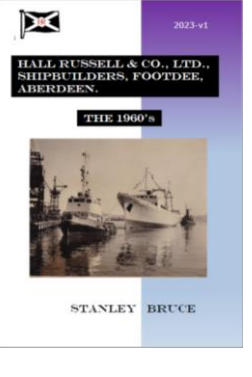
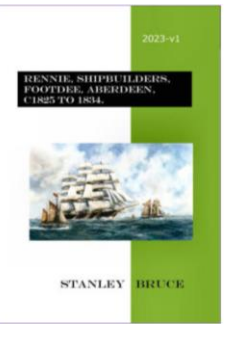
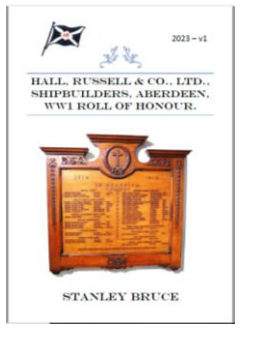
1868 map showing the location of the Custom House at Banff.

Other Titles.

A total of 2,226 pages of Aberdeen shipbuilding history available online to date:

<p>Aberdeen Concrete Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., Torry, Aberdeen, 1918 to 1920 (2018), 31 pages.</p> <p>Walter Hood & Co., Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1839 to 1881 (2018), 220 pages.</p> <p>LESLIE: Ship-owners, Shipmasters, & Shipbuilders of Aberdeen (An Introduction) (2018), 150 pages.</p>			
<p>John Smith & Co., Shipbuilders, Upper Dock, Aberdeen, c1862 to 1867 (2019), 47 pages.</p> <p>SS Intaba Built by Hall, Russell & Co., Ltd. York Place, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1910 (2019), 70 pages.</p> <p>Rifleman, 3-Masted Sailing Ship, Built in Aberdeen, 1860. (2019), 38 pages. <i>(Includes information on the unsolved Great Coram Street Murder of 1872).</i></p>			
<p>Hall Russell Remembered, Shipbuilding in Aberdeen 1864 to 1992, (2007), 36-pages.</p> <p>William Stephen & Co. / William Stephen & Sons, / Alexander Stephen & Sons, Shipbuilders, York Street, Footdee, Aberdeen, 1793 to 1830, (2019), 75 pages.</p> <p>David Burns & Co., Shipbuilders, Inches (Upper Dock), Aberdeen, c1857 to c1866. (2019), 47 pages.</p>			
<p>John Humphrey & Co., Shipbuilders, Upper Dock, Aberdeen, 1865 to 1875. (2020), 92 pages.</p> <p>Hall, Russell Male Voice Choir, Aberdeen, 1918 to 1963. (2021), 244 pages.</p> <p>Leckie, Wood and Munro, Engineers & Iron Shipbuilders, Torry, Aberdeen, 1864 to 1870. (2021). 40 pages.</p>			

Available online to date: (Continued).

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