

# First Steam Ship Built in Aberdeen.

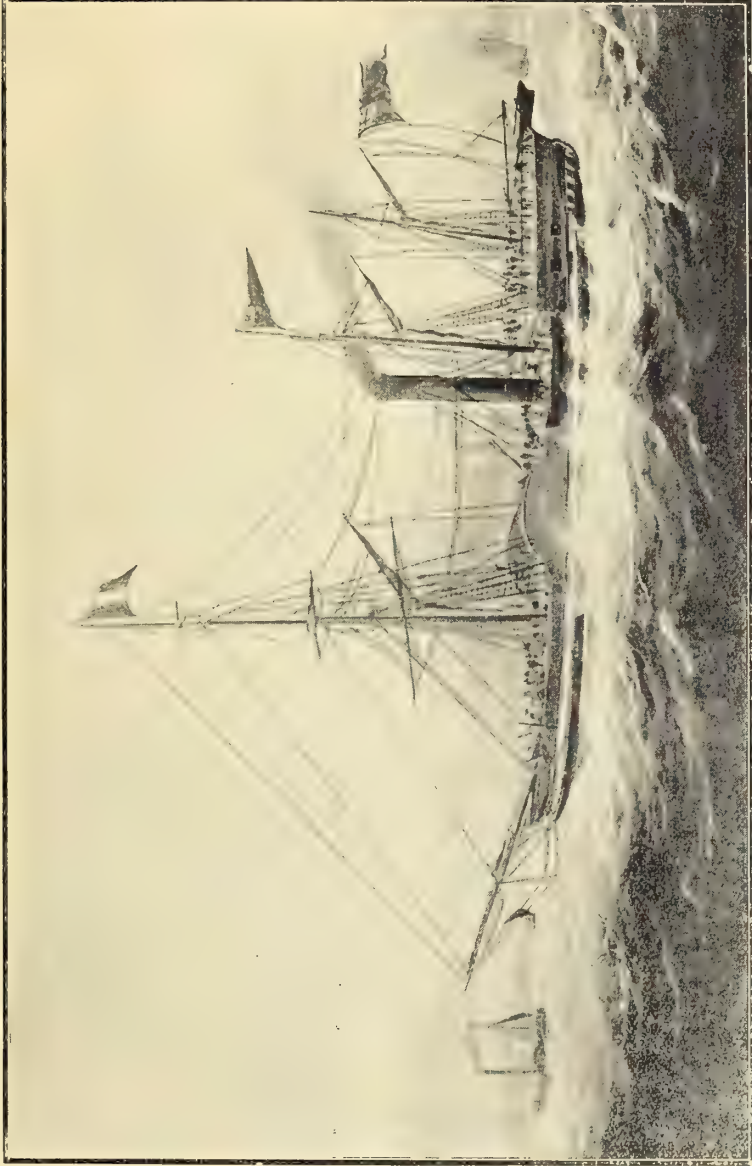
1827.

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**S**HIP-BUILDING has been prosecuted at Aberdeen to a greater or less extent for a lengthened period. On February 26, 1806, Alexander Davidson, timber merchant, St. Andrews, having purchased from the woods of Drum as much timber as would build "ane bark." craved authority from the Town Council of Aberdeen to build the ship in the kirkyard of the Trinity Friars. The application being deemed "verie reasonable," the necessary authority was granted. The Aberdeen-built clippers for a time enjoyed a world-wide reputation, alike for proportion, stability, and speed, but the superior and more reliable sailing powers attained through the introduction of steam have rendered steamers the more popular.

It was not till 1826-27 that an effort was made to build a paddle steamer at the port. The forward movement was undertaken by Messrs. John Duffus & Co., Footdee, and as may be supposed, their action attracted the keenest possible interest. The size of the vessel, when compared with such modern liners as the Olympic and Mauretania, pales into insignificance; but we give the description in the words of one who witnessed the launch, which took place on April 12, 1827 :—

On Thursday last we had the gratification of being present at the launch of the first steam vessel which has been built at this port. If we may judge by the admiration which this magnificent ship has excited among naval and scientific persons, as well as those acquainted with steam navigation, we may safely pronounce her the finest of her class—not only for a frame of timber which cannot be surpassed, but which has been put together in a manner that would do credit to any of the King's dock-yards. The length is that of a 36-gun frigate; she has a spar



Queen of Scotland, first Steamship built at Aberdeen.

deck and poop, with two splendid cabins, separate from the sleeping apartments, which are ranged along the sides of the ship, and all entering from the main deck. These berths have removing stanchions, which, if necessary, would enable her to carry 15 guns on a side. She will be propelled by two engines of seventy-five horse power each, and is calculated to carry, besides her machinery, fuel, etc., three hundred tons.

Notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather from incessant rain, a vast concourse of spectators had assembled at an early hour, and seemed delighted with some beautiful airs played by the band of the Aberdeenshire Militia. At a quarter past one o'clock the Queen of Scotland majestically glided into her future element, amidst the cheers of the multitude, the band playing "God Save the King." This superb vessel has been built by Messrs. J. Duffus & Co., and her engines constructed at their extensive establishment here; and if the Queen of Scotland is to be considered a fair specimen of their work, it will bear a comparison with that of any of her class in the kingdom. The launch was conducted by Mr. Ronald, the master-builder, in a style which did him great credit; and we were much pleased to see the accommodation afforded by the proprietors of the neighbouring dock-yards, whose servants appeared to vie with each other in rendering every assistance in their power on this novel occasion. . . .

It was not till Saturday, August 25, that the trial trip was made. Even then the work was far from completion, it being necessary to take 120 mechanics on board. As it blew fresh, it was found impossible to land them till the following afternoon. They rendered good service in extinguishing a fire which broke out about midnight. Little damage was done, and the vessel was shortly afterwards placed on the regular run between Aberdeen and London.

Our illustration is taken from an oil painting in the possession of The Aberdeen Steam Navigation Company. The artist was Mr. W. Brebner, jun.