

**LIFE OF ROBERT FULTON, AND  
INFORMATION REGARDING THE  
BUSINESS TRANSACTED BY THE  
FULTON TRUST COMPANY OF  
NEW YORK**

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FULTON TRUST  
COMPANY OF NEW YORK**



LIFE OF  
**ROBERT FULTON**

AND INFORMATION REGARDING  
THE BUSINESS TRANSACTED BY  
THE FULTON TRUST COMPANY  
OF NEW YORK



FULTON TRUST COMPANY OF NEW YORK

30 NASSAU STREET

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**T**HE Fulton Trust Company of New York publishes this illustrated pamphlet entitled, "Life of Robert Fulton," hoping its friends and any strangers into whose hands it may fall, will enjoy reviewing some of the principal incidents in the life of one of our illustrious American inventors, after whom this Company is named.

The Fulton Trust Company of New York begs to draw the attention of the reader of the biography of Robert Fulton, to the brief summary of the business transacted by the Company, which follows.

30 Nassau Street, New York.





ROBERT FULTON

FROM A PAINTING BY B. WEST, P. R. A.



## ROBERT FULTON

**R**OBERT FULTON was born November 14, 1765, **His Birth** in the Township of Little Britain, now designated Fulton Township, Pennsylvania. His birthplace, a farm in a beautiful and fertile tract of country, is high among the Conewago Hills of Lancaster County.

The Fulton family had come to America from **Antecedents** Kilkenny, Ireland, early in the eighteenth century. They were undoubtedly descendants of a certain Reverend Doctor Robert Fulton of Scotland, who was appointed by the Privy Council September 8, 1614, to serve as chaplain to the Lady Arabella Stuart, first cousin of King James the First of England. The Lady Arabella was at that time imprisoned in the Tower of London for having assisted her husband, William Seymour, afterward first Marquis of Hertford, in his escape to France.

The descendants of the Reverend Doctor Fulton are known to have later settled in Kilkenny, having been forced from Scotland in Cromwell's time. The early records show that they were men of brave hearts. Those of their descendants who are yet on English soil have added further prestige to the name.

When Robert Fulton was three years old his father **Boyhood** sold the farm and moved with his family to the town of Lancaster. There in 1773 Robert was sent to school. He very early evinced inventive talent, and is said to have been fond of sundry experiments in making lead-pencils, sky-rockets, designs for improved guns—and even a fishing boat to be propelled by moving paddles. His boyish nickname, "Quicksilver Bob," was probably given in recognition of

## FULTON TRUST COMPANY of NEW YORK

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his bright activities of thought; for several examples of indomitable courage of mind are recorded by biographers:

"My head is so full of original notions that there is no vacant chamber to store away the contents of dusty books!" and

"I'm going to shoot candles [sky-rockets] into the air. Nothing is impossible."

These latter words were indeed prophetic.

### Artistic Ambition

Robert Fulton possessed two mental abilities which are not often held in conjunction. He was mechanical and intensely practical, yet he loved beauty of form and its every expression. Thus it is of especial interest to note that at the age of seventeen he decided to become an artist, and with this desire in mind went to Philadelphia to study portrait painting as a profession. There he made the acquaintance of Benjamin Franklin, then about to be sent to the court of France. Mr. Franklin's keen wit and original manner of expression must have proved an inspiration to the observant young art student.

### His Friendships

Robert Fulton had the power, even in youth, of attracting and developing friendships with people of high mental attainment. When, four years later, he went to England he was speedily and cordially welcomed by Mr. Benjamin West, at that time president of the Royal Academy of Great Britain, whose comradeship was intimately shared for several years, to the inestimable value of the younger American. About this time Robert Fulton also met the Duke of Bridgewater, who had introduced canals through England, and Lord Stanhope, a man of science who was deeply interested in mechanical devices. Mr.

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Fulton's later correspondence with these men and with others, furnishes further proof of his charm of personality—his heart was as true and unerring as his brain. In Birmingham Robert Fulton conferred with the celebrated James



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Watt, who had perfected the steam engine. He studied this invention with great interest and profit.

In 1797 Robert Fulton crossed the Channel and went to Paris. Soon after his arrival he achieved a helpful intimacy with Mr. Joel Barlow, the American poet and

Life in  
France