

**THE LIFE OF HENRY BELL. THE PRACTICAL
INTRODUCER OF THE STEAM-BOAT INTO
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND. TO
WHICH IS ADDED AS HISTORICAL
SKETCH OF STEAM NAVIGATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649633746

The Life of Henry Bell. The Practical Introducer of the Steam-Boat into Great Britain and Ireland. To Which Is Added as Historical Sketch of Steam Navigation by Edward Morris

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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EDWARD MORRIS

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HENRY BELL

BLACK & WHITE
LONDON, PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD.

THE LIFE
OF
HENRY BELL,

THE PRACTICAL INTRODUCER OF THE
STEAM-BOAT INTO GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND;

IN WHICH IS ADDED, &c.
HISTORICAL SKETCH OF STEAM NAVIGATION,

BY EDWARD MORRIS,

AUTHOR OF THE "BRITISH RIVER OF DEATH;"—"BANNER
OF TEMPERANCE;" AND "HONORARY LECTURER OF THE GLASGOW,
TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES."

"Soon shall thy arm, unconquer'd steam, afar
Drag the slow barge, and drive the rapid car."

DARWIN.

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
AND SOLD BY
BLACKIE AND SON,
GLASGOW, EDINBURGH, AND LONDON;
AND BY JOHN MILLER, 85, INGRAM STREET, GLASGOW.
MDCCLXV.

GLASGOW:
W. G. BLACKIE AND CO.,
PRINTERS.

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To Genl. Pitt
Bath
Nov. 1849

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

TO THE HONOURABLE SIR JAMES CAMPBELL, LORD
PROVOST OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW, AND THE
OTHER TRUSTEES OF THE RIVER CLYDE :

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

To whom could I so fitly inscribe my little work, "The Life of Henry Bell, Engineer," as to you, the zealous public guardians of that noble river on whose swelling flood steam-navigation first displayed, in Britain, its practical wonders ;—that great system of maritime intercourse, which has so beneficially revolutionized the commercial and social dealings of the nations ;—that system which is destined by divine providence to be one of the greatest and most sublime instruments of spreading civilization, learning, science, morality, and religion, "far as the sun gilds the ocean and shore?" To Henry Bell are we indebted, as you well know, for the practical introduction of this magnificent discovery. From his honoured brow the laurels never can be torn. Over his grave the flowers will bloom in one perpetual spring ; and that river, which rolls its waves past the sweet spot where he reposes, will never cease to call him conquerer of its

flood. The ancient poets of Greece, Rome, and England, with all their brilliant imagination and grasping conception, never could anticipate the triumphs which the steam-boat has achieved on the vasty deep. Homer and Virgil, Shakspeare and Milton, Pope and Dryden, Cowper and Goldsmith, with all their powers of language, had no figures of speech which could unfold the movements, or describe the splendour of those majestic palaces which cross the billowy ocean, and navigate the immens rivers of America, Canada, Egypt, India, and China, so that the flag of Britannia waves on every shore. From Bell's "Comet" of 1811, all these rovers of the deep had their birth: from the little river craft of ten to fifteen horse-power, to the leviathan of a thousand! Their safety surpasses the mail-coach on terra firma, and their swiftness will almost match that of the eagle.

My Lord and Gentlemen, having taken an active part in the effort made some years ago in Glasgow and other places to raise subscriptions for Mr. Bell, and having promised my venerated friend that I would endeavour, at some convenient time, to write a Memoir of his Life, with an outline of the history of that system of navigation which will immortalise his name, I now commit this promised work to you, and to the public; having done my best to redeem my pledge.

The illustrious names which are incorporated in this little book, with their testimonial notes expressive of Mr. Bell's claims, form a tower of strength in his defence, and will tend, I hope, to scatter the last

remains of scepticism as to his merits as the Father of steam-navigation. Brunel, Telford, Napier, Fawcett, Ewing, Sinclair, Parnell, Cleland, Smith, Gladstone, Campbell, and M'Gavin, did him good service, for which he was grateful; and they aided me powerfully during the period when the appeal was made in Glasgow, Liverpool, and London.

Citizens of Glasgow! You will not forget Bell. Many of you remember when he started the Comet on your lovely river; it was with mingled fear and hope that you beheld his first movement; but hope triumphed, as you saw him glide away, with neither oar nor canvas, against the opposing tide. Dumbarton, Greenock, and Helensburgh, witnessed his victory; and flags were waving expressive of gladness. He opened more expansively the glories of your romantic river, and the sublime scenery which adorns its shores, and calls forth the admiration of the tourist. From the city of Glasgow you may now go to every land. The steam-boats which have been built by the Clyde engineers, have carried the fame of their constructors into far distant lands. The 300,000 inhabitants of this great and beautiful city have thus the means of traveling by steam-boats, swift canal-boats, and railways, to an extent which our forefathers never dreamt of, and of which the most gifted philosophers of old could form no conception.

Were Bacon, Locke, and Newton, to behold these vehicles, how would they be astonished at the transcendent progress of society in all that adorns and dig-

nifies human life. Though not a native of this city, I would say, in the words of a Dumfriesshire poet, who sung of Glasgow and its beauties in the following strains:—

O Glasgow! fan'd for ilka thing
That heart can wish, or siller bring,
May peace, with healing on its wing,
Aye nestle there;
And plenty make thy children sing
From year to year!

MAYNE.

My Lord and Gentlemen, these are my OWN wishes for the "Queen of the West;" and may that river, whose charms have been alluded to, be improved by you from year to year in its navigation, with barks, encreasing in size and number, some driven by steam, and others by breeze and canvas, to every "nation, tribe, and people," with the fruits of our industry; and bringing back in return the products of distant lands.

Free-trade is the philosophy of commerce; and the steam-ship will cut up all monopolies. This was Henry Bell's opinion, and to this it must come. Britain needs this free barter, and she has nothing to dread from the doctrine. So reasoned Adam Smith in his "Wealth of Nations," and his doctrines will finally triumph.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord and Gentlemen,
Yours respectfully,
EDWARD MORRIS.

GLASGOW, }
1843. }