



ARRIVAL OF THE "SIRIUS" AT NEW YORK. 22nd APRIL, 1838

The original of above is certified as correct by Lieutenant Roberts. R.N.

Block lent by Messrs. Gity, Cork]

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Our Quotation—7

“ Take care of indulging in little selfishnesses ; learn to consider others in trifles ; be careful to fulfil the minor social duties ; and the mind, so disciplined, will find it easier to fulfil the greater duties, and the character will not exhibit that trying inconsistency which one sees in great, and, often, in pious persons.”

AMELIA OPIE (1769-1853).

Irish Friends and Early Steam Navigation

CORK

OUR attention has been drawn to the work of Friends in the South of Ireland in connection with the introduction of steam navigation by the reading of articles in *The Journal of the Cork Historical and Archæological Society* for 1917 (vol. xxiii.), now re-published as *History of Port of Cork Steam Navigation*, with numerous illustrations, by William J. Barry, 1919. Gleanings from this book and from private advices are here introduced.

The founder of the St. George Steam Packet Company, c. 1824, was Joseph Robinson Pim (1787-1858), described, in 1835, by James Clark, of Street, as "an Irish Friend well known as principal manager of, I suppose, nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ the Steam Packets in the Kingdom. He has a very nice house and garden [near Liverpool]." (THE JOURNAL, xvi. 132.) He was the father of Joseph Robinson Pim, usually known as "Captain Pim" (1832-1900), who lived at Valence, France (*Annual Monitor*, 1901).

Two of this company's boats, *Lee* and *Severn*, were placed respectively on the Liverpool and Bristol Line. Robert J. Lecky wrote to the author of the *History* :

I well remember Monday, the 4th October, 1824, when the "Lee" (Captain Chapman) came up to Lapp's Quay, when Tom Ross and I seized the mail box, and ran with it to Lecky and Mark's Office (which was on the site of Father Mathew's Chapel on Charlotte Quay), and sent out the letters by our liveried porters nicknamed "Cockatoos."

Robert J. Lecky (1809-1897, portrait in *History*) was a son of John Lecky, of Cork, and a member of the firm of R. J. Lecky & Co., Iron Shipbuilders, etc., of Cork. He was a brother-in-law of J. R. Pim, Senr.

The following circular was issued in 1824 :

STEAM NAVIGATION.

The LEE Steam Packet, being now ready to commence plying between LIVERPOOL and CORK, and SEVERN expected also to commence in a short time between BRISTOL and CORK; we think it might be acceptable to all concerned in the *Importation of Goods from Great Britain*, or the *Exportation of Irish Produce and Manufactures*, to be informed, that it is intended to despatch these superior Packets, weekly, throughout ALL the Seasons of the year, with whatever Goods and Passengers may offer, PUNCTUALLY at the times that may be appointed for their departure.

Being constructed and built on the most approved plan, and with powerful Engines, it is confidently expected that every satisfaction will be experienced by the shippers and consignees of goods, and that the accommodations for Passengers will be found to be most commodious and comfortable. A Female Steward on board will attend to her proper department.

The expedition of the conveyance will be such, as, in most cases, to precede the advices of shipments, and thereby prevent the owners or consignees from effecting Insurance; to remedy this, the PATRIOTIC ASSURANCE COMPANY of Ireland has authorized its Agent to open policies for any sum on goods, as interest may appear, to be shipped on these Packets at any time, whereby every parcel of goods will be covered effectually from the instant of shipping, until the amount of the different shipments come to that of the sum in the policy, the shipper notifying

at the respective time of shipping to the Agents of the Packets the value of the goods going on board.

Proprietors of shares in the Packets are entitled to go in them, at all times, free of charge for passage money.

JOHN LECKY, Agent to the Patriotic Assurance Co.
LECKY AND MARK, ACTING PROPRIETORS.

CORK, 21st of 9th Month, 1824.

Ross and Johnson, Brokers.

Printed by Hennessy, French-Church-Street.

For John Lecky (1764-1839), merchant and banker, see vol. xv. 10.

In 1826, the *Severn* had to encounter severe opposition on the Bristol line from the *Superb*, the owners of which were exclusively merchants and traders of the City and County of Cork. Among these owners were the following Friends: Joseph Harris, Ebenezer Pike, Harvey Sons & Deaves, and perhaps John Cotter. "The *Severn* and *Superb* war" raged fiercely for some time. The owners of the *Severn* posted bills, announcing:

EACH
DECK PASSENGER PER
" SEVERN "
WILL GET A
LOAF OF BREAD
GRATIS.

but this attraction only lasted two trips. The loaves were bought from William Martin, the Friend who started Father Mathew on his temperance crusade. The *Superb* was ultimately vanquished and was purchased by the St. George Company.

In 1844 the St. George Company was merged into the Cork Steamship Company, of which Ebenezer Pike, J.P. (1806-1883), of Bessborough, Blackrock, was the guiding star. He was succeeded by his son, Joseph Pike, J.P., D.L., of Glamire, who was a Friend in early life. E. Pike's daughter, Mary Lecky, married Arthur Pease, M.P., of Darlington. Portraits of father and son appear in the *History*.

A list of the proprietors of the St. George Company (23 ii. 1842) appears on pp. 41, 42, of the *History*; it includes the names of numerous Friends—James Beale, Grizell Maria Bradshaw (Dublin), Sarah Bradshaw

(London), Cropper, Crewdson, Goff, Harvey, Hutchinson, James Midgley (Rochdale), Newsom, Pim, Pike, etc.

Robert J. Lecky, wrote as follows to the author of the *History* (p. 16) :

I well remember being one of a party (I was twelve years old at the time) invited on board the "Bencoolin," bound to Botany Bay with convicts. She was owned by Cropper, Benson & Co., of Liverpool. This was in 1821, and our party consisted of Reuben Harvey, his daughter Eliza, my father and sisters, Abby and Lizzie, and myself. On arrival at Cove we went to the "Bencoolin," Abby and Lizzie dressed in white muslin, Friends' bonnets, etc., being escorted on board the East Indiaman by Major Prior dressed in full regimentals. I recollect how handsome the trio looked.

It was a Friend who was the immediate cause of sending across the Atlantic the first¹ vessel to steam the whole distance. At a meeting of the British Association in 1836, Dr. Dionysius Lardner (1793-1859), lecturing on Steam Navigation, declared :

As to the project of establishing a steam intercourse with the United States . . . it was, he had no hesitation in saying, perfectly chimerical, and they might as well talk of making a voyage from New York or Liverpool to the moon.

On hearing this pronouncement, James Beale (c. 1798-1879) who was much occupied in steam-ship business, declared that not only was it practicable, but that if anyone would join him, he would guarantee to coal and send out a steamer from Cork, then built, to New York, and find a captain who should be competent to take her.

The *Sirius* was chartered from the St. George Steam Packet Co.; it began its transatlantic voyage on the 31st March, 1838, being accompanied to the entrance of the harbour by Joseph R. Pim, James Beale and others, in the *Ocean*. Among the owners of the vessel were "Joseph Robinson Pim, of Oakfield, in the County of Chester, and Jonathan Pim, of Bloomsbury in the County of Dublin." She arrived off New York on the 22nd April² (see illustration). The saloon fare was thirty-five guineas. She consumed 450 tons of coal, compared with the 6,600 tons consumed by the *Mauretania* over the same course. The return voyage began on 1st May, and the vessel reached Falmouth on the 18th. Her captain was Lieutenant Richard Roberts, R.N.

The *History* gives a portrait of James Beale. He was an uncle of Alfred and Henry H. Beale, of Cork, and great-uncle of Charles E. Beale, William Goff Beale and Alfred Beale, Jun. H. H. Beale was secretary to the Cork Steam Shipping Company for many years.

Malcomson Brothers, of Neptune Iron Works, Waterford, were extensive ship-builders and steamship owners. Their SS. *Iowa* was launched in November, 1863, the year of the establishment of Iowa Yearly Meeting. She was of 4,000 tons burden. In December, 1864, she was lost on the coast of France, near Cherbourg, represented to be worth £60,000 to £80,000. In Spring, 1865, some £12,000 was expended on an attempt to raise her; about July, 1865, Lloyd's Salvage Association succeeded in floating her and she was brought into the Imperial Dockyard at Cherbourg. "It is no small tribute to the character of the work turned out at the Neptune Iron Works that this noble ship, after lying several months on the rocks, subject to the violent action of the seas and the attempts to raise her, has been found entire excepting the holes made by the rocks."

In June, 1865, the SS. *William Penn*, over 4,000 tons burden, was launched, and in May, 1867, the *Indiana* took to the sea, being the twenty-seventh SS. built at Neptune Iron Works.

The SS. *Avoca*, built at Neptune Works, was the first¹ steamship to attempt to force the ice at Odessa and open the port, 1862.

Malcomson Brothers, with Anthony G. Robinson, owned the St. Petersburg Steam Ship Company, London to Petrograd. Joseph Malcomson (c. 1798-1858) was the first¹ person to bring a steamer to Petrograd, and it is said that he was fêted by the Czar.

William Malcomson (c. 1813-1892) was chairman of Lever's Line, Galway to U.S.A.

Joseph and William Malcomson were sons of David Malcomson (c. 1764-1844), who, after being awhile in the employ of Sarah Grubb, *née* Pim, at Anner Mills, near Clonmel, established himself as a miller at Clonmel, and engaged largely in other industries assisted by his five

sons. He married Mary Fennell (probably the Mary Malcomson who died in 1854, aged 84).

In the *Catholic Record*, of September, 1918, there is an account of some of the commercial activities of David Malcomson under the caption: "A Glimpse of Industrial Clonmel in 1829," written by Richard Lalor Sheil (1791-1851), author, orator and politician.

Ebenezer Pike built numerous vessels in his Water Street building yard, during the period 1848 to 1860—the *Gannet* was the first, and no less than 370 men were employed at the yard.

The *Southern Reporter*, of 4th July, 1848, states:

While others are talking on the subject of Irish manufacture and doing nothing, Mr. Pike, the enterprising builder . . . expends a very large sum in wages to the various workmen employed. . . .

George Robinson & Co. had a ship-building yard adjoining that of E. Pike.

R. and J. Lecky built the first¹ screw steamer, the *Rattler*, in 1846, "which at once focussed the attention of the propeller as a new means of propulsion, and went far to establish its use in the mercantile marine" (*History*, pp. 4, 47). They also built "the first¹ double dredger built in the United Kingdom, having a chain of buckets on each side" (*ibid.* p. 5).

Ship-building in Cork ceased about 1867.

DUBLIN

Joseph Robinson Pim was a director of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co. from about 1832 to 1837.

BELFAST

John Pim, J.P., of Belfast, has kindly prepared the following:

The earliest instance yet found of a Belfast Friend being connected with steamers is that of John Pim (1800-1865) who in 1838 became agent in Belfast for the paddle steam packet *Solway*, running between Belfast

Friends' Historical Society

It is intended to hold the

ANNUAL MEETING

at the Penn Club, 8-10, Tavistock Square,
London, W.C.1, on 19th of April, 1921,
when ERNEST E. TAYLOR will
deliver his presidential address, entitled:

***“THE FIRST PUBLISHERS OF TRUTH:
A Study from the Economic Standpoint.”***

COFFEE at 6 p.m. Members and others are cordially invited to be present.

and Port Carlisle, affording, as announced on the Sailing Bills, "direct and expeditious communication with Carlisle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Hull, York, Leeds, London, &c., &c."

For a couple of years from about 1850, Edward (1804-1877) and his brother, George C. Pim (1807-1882), trading as George C. Pim & Co., were agents for the Waterford Steam Ship Co.'s service between Belfast and Liverpool. About the middle of last century, Richardson Brothers & Co., of Belfast, with a branch house in Liverpool, were owners of sailing vessels, the principal members of the firm being John Grubb Richardson, of Belfast and Bessbrook (1813-1890), James N. Richardson (1818-1896), Joseph Richardson (1821-1905), and William Valentine (1812-1894), an ex-Friend. About 1849 they started and managed the Liverpool and Philadelphia Steam Ship Co., whose first vessel, the *City of Glasgow*, sailed from Liverpool for Philadelphia in December, 1850. She and her numerous successors were so well equipped and successful, they rapidly attracted an extensive passenger and cargo trade.

The second-named partner inaugurated¹ the system of carrying steerage passengers at about £5 per head, then considered to be such a low figure that it would prove unprofitable. However, the capital accommodation and food provided, so vastly superior to the old emigrant ships, attracted such crowds of emigrants and others that it proved a great success and other Companies soon followed suit.

In 1854, during the Crimean War, the British Government offered very attractive terms for the Charter of the Company's steamers. Many shareholders strongly urged acceptance, but the Richardsons, being Friends, conscientiously refused their consent, and being outvoted, retired, disposing of their shares and interest in the concern, which eventually has become the well-known American Line.

Aforenamed William Valentine and Jacob Bell (1805-1856), another ex-Friend, a flax spinner, united with numerous leading Belfast merchants in forming in 1852 the Belfast Steam Ship Co., for a service between Belfast and Liverpool. It became a Limited Company

in 1872. William Valentine and Elias H. Thompson (1822-1880), a flax and yarn merchant, were most active members of the Board of Directors for nearly thirty years. Joshua Pim (born 1837) joined the Board in 1880, and was Vice-Chairman for about twenty years. His brother, John Pim (born 1835) retired recently from the Secretaryship, after holding the position for over forty-three years. The Company's first steamer was the *Telegraph*, which at once became celebrated for her high speed, 16 knots, and superior accommodation. She was chartered to the British Government during part of the Crimean War. The Commander-in-Chief selected her to carry the dispatches of the fall of Sebastopol. Those on board that voyage never forgot the shaking they experienced from the very high speed at which she was driven—without injury to herself. Another of the Company's fleet, the *Sea Nymph*, similarly chartered, was one of the few vessels which survived the terrific hurricane off Eupatoria in the Black Sea on 14th November, 1854, described by Dr. Russell, the famous correspondent of *The Times*, as "the most terrible gale ever known in this part of the world." Her underwriters were so pleased, they presented the Captain, George Harris Tallen, with a handsome service of plate, "as a testimony to his seamanship and presence of mind which under God preserved crew and vessel."

In 1859 the Company took over the vessels and business of the long established Langtry's Line, whose *Waterloo*, which had sailed from Belfast on 21st July, 1819, was the first coastwise or cross Channel steamer to enter the Mersey.

The Directors in 1854 realised that the screw was a better and more economical mode of propulsion than paddles, and had the SS. *Semaphore* built; she more than satisfied their expectations. The first Mediterranean telegraph cable was laid from her in August, 1860.

In 1866 the Company purchased the fleet and trade of a line from Londonderry to Liverpool, which had first started in 1831.

The fame and success of the Belfast Steam Ship Co., Limited, have largely been the result of maintaining first class passenger and cargo services between Belfast and Londonderry with Liverpool and Manchester.