

A COLLECTION OF PAPERS

READ BEFORE THE

BUCKS COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY



PUBLISHED FOR THE SOCIETY

BY

B. F. FACKENTHAL, JR.

RIEGELSVILLE, PA.

1909

VOLUME II.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

HON. HARMAN YERKES

HENRY C. MERCER

WARREN S. ELY

MRS. AGNES WILLIAMS PALMER

CLARENCE D. HOTCHKISS

B. F. FACKENTHAL, JR.

PRESS OF
THE CHEMICAL PUBLISHING CO.
EASTON, PA.

tinental army, on which hung the hopes of free government in America, marched to attack the Hessians at Trenton. The evening before, December 24th, Washington rode over to Merriks to take supper with Greene, and, no doubt, Knox, Sterling and Sullivan were there. The family were sent across the fields to spend the night at a neighbor's, so there could be no listeners to the council of war that destroyed British Empire in America. The troops marched about three on Christmas afternoon and reached the place of rendezvous, at the mouth of Knowles' creek, where the crossing was to be made, about sundown. The rest of the story I need not tell; you, who have read American history aright, are familiar with it; those of you who have not read it, should not fail to do so at the first opportunity.

John Fitch, The Inventor of Steam Navigation.*

BY REV. D. K. TURNER, HARTSVILLE, PA.

(Davisville Meeting, July 16, 1889).

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

Men often fail of suitable rewards for their labors, though they may have toiled with apparent wisdom, energy and perseverance. An eminent illustration of this is found in the career of John Fitch, the first person who successfully applied the power of steam to navigation. He was born of English ancestry, Jan. 21, 1743, in Windsor, Conn., and in his youth served an apprenticeship with a watchmaker, but received very little instruction at his trade, being kept by his master mostly at farming. After being released from his indentures, with an imperfect knowledge of time-pieces, but with much native mechanical genius, he worked a few years at brass founding, married and had a son and daughter, but not being able to live harmoniously with his wife, he turned his steps southward, journeying on foot and repairing clocks and watches for subsistence by the way.

For some time previous to the American Revolution, he

* Rev. Turner read a paper on John Fitch at the Wrightstown meeting, July 31, 1883. As this is a later paper, and as both cover practically the same material, it has been thought better to omit the publication of the first paper, in order to avoid duplication, and to give the author the benefit of his latest paper on the subject.

resided in New Jersey, at Trenton, and during that struggle he was employed by the public authorities in repairing fire-arms for the Continental soldiers, for which service he was peculiarly adapted, and was more useful to his country than if he had served in the ranks, though he had been chosen lieutenant and had fully intended to join the army in the field. When the British troops from New York approached the Delaware, all active patriots were compelled to seek some place of safety, and he retired across the river into Pennsylvania, finding a home temporarily with John Mitchell at Four Lanes' End (now Langhorne) in Bucks county, and afterwards with Charles Garrison, in Warminster. He set up the business of a silversmith in the shop of Jacobus Scout, a wheelwright, commonly called Cobe Scout. While Washington's forces were at Valley Forge, he supplied them with tobacco and beer, and realized large profits in Continental currency, which, however, rapidly depreciated on his hands. At one time he had forty thousand dollars in paper, which in the course of a year or two sank in value to a hundred dollars in silver and in order to prevent it from becoming altogether worthless he determined to invest it in land warrants and locate them in Virginia. In his boyhood he had learned something of surveying and by study and practice had acquired proficiency in it. This prepared him for the position of deputy surveyor, which he secured through the recommendation of influential friends in Philadelphia. Clothed with the proper authority, he went to Kentucky, then a part of Virginia, and in that dense wilderness, rarely visited by civilized man, he passed 1780 and a portion of 1781, laying out tracts of the most fertile land and, as he believed, had secured the foundation of an immense fortune, when Congress adopted a new method of survey and the most of his labor proved of no avail. In 1782, when on a commercial expedition down the Ohio river en route to New Orleans, he was captured by Indians, who were in the interests of the British, and carried to Canada, it was almost a year before he was exchanged and returned to the United States. Peculiarly unfortunate in most of his enterprises, he realized the force of the proverb, "The best laid plans of mice and men aft gang alee."

On Sunday in the month of April, 1785, after having been to Neshaminy church, where Rev. Nathaniel Irwin preached, he was walking along the Street road toward his home in company with James Ogilbee. Being troubled with rheumatism, which he had contracted in his tours through the Western wilds, he found his progress somewhat difficult. When a gentleman passed him rapidly in a carriage, drawn by a spirited horse, the idea occurred to him, "Could not a vehicle be invented which would move without a horse?" Ogilbee afterward said that he at once became inattentive to conversation and seemed lost in thought, and Fitch subsequently affirmed that he then first conceived the notion that steam might be applied to propel carriages on land. This occupied his mind for a week, when he was convinced that the roughness of common roads would prove an insurmountable obstacle to the use of steam in ordinary wagons. But the employment of it in vessels presented itself as practicable, and the more he contemplated it, the more he was impressed with its feasibility and its great importance. With the utmost diligence and enthusiasm, he set about making drawings of a boat to be propelled by steam which he took to his friend, Rev. Nathaniel Irwin, who is spoken of by Dr. Archibald Alexander, of Princeton, as "a man of a profound understanding." Mr. Irwin had in his library a book containing a description of a steam engine and showed it to the self-taught inventor. In his manuscript autobiography, now in possession of the Philadelphia Library Company, Fitch says, "Although it was not to my credit, I did not know that there was a steam engine on earth when I proposed to gain force by steam," and he adds, when the drawing at Mr. Irwin's was shown him, "I was very much chagrined." Still, on reflection, he concluded that as the mighty force of heated vapor had never as yet been applied to boats, it would be a grand triumph of mechanical skill if he could devise the machinery by which it could be accomplished. He first constructed a small model boat with paddle-wheels. Hon. Nathaniel B. Boileau, afterwards a noted politician in Pennsylvania and Secretary of State under Governor Snyder, told Daniel Longstreth, formerly a highly respected citizen of Warminster, that he himself when at home on a vacation from Princeton college

made the paddle-wheels, which were of wood, and that Fitch made the rest of the machinery of brass. Mr. Longstreth's language giving Mr. Boileau's statement is this:

"It was in 'Cobe' Scout's log shop that Fitch made his model steamboat with paddle-wheels as they are now used. The model was tried on a small stream on Joseph Longstreth's meadow, about half a mile from Davisville, in Southampton township, and it realized every expectation."

Through the courtesy of General Davis, I am permitted to present an account of this trial of the boat, taken down by him in 1858, from the mouth of Abraham McDowell, of Warminster township, who was an eye witness of the scene, when in his childhood. Mr. McDowell said:

"I was acquainted with John Fitch, the steamboat man. Sometime after the Revolutionary war, he came to my father's house, in Warminster township, Bucks county, Pa., to board, where he remained two or three years or more. Near the house was an old log shop, where my father carried on weaving, and James Scout, called 'Cobe Scout,' did silver-smithing. In this shop John Fitch built his first steamboat, which I distinctly remember, as I was a good-sized boy. It was about four feet in length and a little over a foot in breadth, with a wheel in the stern, somewhat like a flutter-wheel. When the boat was done it was taken to a dam on the farm of Arthur Watts, in Southampton township, near the present village of Davisville, and now owned by Gen. John Davis. John Fitch was accompanied by James Scout, Abraham Sutphin, Anthony Scout, John McDowell, William Vansant and Charles Garrison. I went along out of boyish curiosity, and after we reached the dam, Arthur Watts and, I think his son, William Watts, then a young man, came out to witness the experiment. I was sent up to the head of the dam, where the water was shallow and the mud deep, as the men did not like to go where they would get muddy. I waded in a little distance, where the water was deep enough to allow the boat to float, and stood there. The boat was launched, and in a few minutes it put off under a full headway, puffing and the smoke flying, and very soon reached the opposite side of the dam. This run being too short, it was next started lengthwise of the dam, and made several trips back and forth to and from the point where I stood. When it reached me, I turned it around and headed it toward the starting point again. We were there two or three hours, and until all were tired and satisfied with the experiments, when we returned home, Fitch carrying the boat under his arm. The late Nathaniel Boileau, Esq., then a young man, turned some part of the machinery for the boat and I carried it back and forth several times, and I remember I thought the wheels were very pretty things and wanted them for a wagon. I was born in 1782, and at that time I could not have been less than four or five years old. The whole transaction is indelibly impressed upon my memory. Soon after this trial, Fitch took his boat to Philadelphia, where he met some person who told him some part of the machinery was not right, and that he had better alter it, when Fitch returned home with the boat to make the suggested alteration, after which he went a second time to Philadelphia with his boat. The shop in which this boat was built was on the farm now owned by Mitchell Wood, in Warminster township, within about three hundred yards of the line of Montgomery county. Mr. Boileau lived at this time with his father, on the farm now owned by Lewis Willard, on the line between Bucks and Montgomery counties, near the eight-square school-house and little more than a mile from Davisville.

Yours, respectfully,

[Signed] ABRAHAM McDOWELL."

This account bears many marks of truth, though Mr. McDowell, if he is correct about the date of his birth, could have been at the time of the experiment but four years and a few months old. He may have recollected the names of the men who were present and other circumstances by often hearing the matter talked about afterwards, as a remarkable affair of that kind would naturally be. The engine used in the little craft was constructed in Philadelphia, and judging from all the historical data accessible, was the first steam engine ever made on this continent.

It is stated in Westcott's "Life of Fitch," (prepared from the manuscript autobiography of the inventor), that in 1786 a company of individuals was formed who contributed \$300, to enable him to complete and bring forth his proposed boat into practical use. "The first great difficulty was the making of a steam engine, a piece of machinery, which the mechanical capability of the country was scarcely able to furnish. There were at that time but *three* steam engines in operation in America." They were all imported from England; two were in New England and one in New Jersey. None had ever been constructed this side the Atlantic. Fitch first engaged John Nancarrow, of Philadelphia, to assist him in his experiment, and at the end of a month the machinist produced drawings of the old-fashioned atmospheric engine, that "was to have a weight to raise the piston." This did not satisfy Fitch, and that plan was rejected. After a time he became acquainted with Henry Voight, a watchmaker in Philadelphia, who had displayed much ingenuity, and concluded to employ him to assist in the work. They first made a small engine, the cylinder of which was only one inch in diameter and would not move regularly; the force generated was not able to fully overcome the friction. The expense was very slight, being only £3 Pennsylvania currency, or \$8.00. Though Fitch had never seen a steam engine of any kind before, and this was of almost insignificant capacity and operated imperfectly, yet it illustrated the idea he had formed, and he was confident his invention would ultimately be of vast importance to mankind. This little one-inch cylinder engine was placed in the model boat and set forth on a pond near Davisville, and was the germ of the vast commerce by steam, which now

traverses the rivers, lakes and oceans of the world and enriches all lands.

Fitch and his friend immediately commenced the construction of an engine with a three-inch cylinder, and at the same time they made a skiff with the apparatus for its propulsion, which, by way of experiment, they moved by hand until the new engine was finished. They employed "a screw of paddles," an endless chain, and one or two other kinds of gear, but they did not give satisfactory results. These trials were made on the Delaware river, and were witnessed by several persons, who jeered and scoffed when Fitch landed on the shore, and he was so much mortified at his want of success in overcoming difficulties that he went to a tavern, and, as he says, "used considerable West India produce that evening," of which he was much ashamed the next day. The following night he went to bed early, and, instead of sleeping, thought what kind of gearing he should use in his boat, and after some hours, it suddenly struck him that cranks and paddles would be a practicable arrangement, and for fear he should forget the precise idea, he arose, struck a light, and made a draught of it. Early in the morning he went to see Voight, showed him his plan; it was approved, was put into operation in the skiff, and, with some changes, worked by hand successfully. Soon the steam engine with a three-inch cylinder was completed, placed in the skiff, and attached to the oars, and made the little craft hurry over the water at the speed of seven or eight miles an hour, and Fitch was certain that with a more powerful engine the velocity might be increased to ten or twelve miles an hour.

The funds of the company were running low, and an unsuccessful effort was made, through Dr. Benjamin Franklin, to sell the engine to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. It cost about a hundred dollars, but the inventors were willing to part with it for any sum they could get. Much gratification was felt by the members of the company in the result of the efforts of Fitch. They were satisfied now that his invention would prove practicable and useful, yet they hesitated about contributing more money. It was proposed to build an engine with a twelve-inch cylinder also a much larger boat, for which

a considerable expenditure would be required; but the means were not furnished and Fitch experienced great distress at the unwillingness of his associates to provide funds.

He therefore wrote a letter to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, asking for a loan of £150, or \$400, and in this communication he says: "Mr. Voight and myself are sure that we can build an engine; nay, we are vain enough to believe that we can make one as good as they can in Europe;" and he declares that in his opinion his plan will be worth to America three times as much as all the territory northwest of Ohio, and that it would open that part of the land to settlement by making it possible to go rapidly up the current of swift rivers with large quantities of merchandise and many passengers. His petition was respectfully received and placed in the hands of a committee, who reported favorably, recommending a loan, but the bill failed by a small negative majority. He then wrote to Governor Mifflin, requesting that a private subscription might be taken among the members of the Legislature, but no effort was made to aid him in that way. After much persistent labor with all who were interested in the scheme, money enough was secured to finish the engine and place it in the boat. But defects immediately appeared. The cylinder had *wooden* caps and they admitted air; the piston box was leaky and all the works had to be taken out, altered and put in again at a large expense. Then the condensation was imperfect and new condensers were required; then the steam valves were not tight. As soon as one defect was remedied another appeared. Finally when every fault seemed to be obviated and all parts were adjusted, it was found that the boiler was not large enough to generate sufficient steam. Although the contributors were discouraged, they were persuaded to respond once more; the necessary alterations were made, and the boat was tried publicly on the Delaware, August 22, 1787. The convention to frame a Constitution of the United States was at that time in session in Philadelphia and an invitation was extended to the members to witness the experiment, and Fitch says in his journal that nearly all of them were present, except General Washington. They considered it successful, though the machinery was not sufficiently powerful to move the

boat very swiftly against the current. Governor Randolph, of Virginia, "was pleased to give the invention countenance," and the next day Dr. Johnson, of the same state, sent a complimentary note to the persevering genius. Governor Ellsworth, of Connecticut, informed Rev. Ezra Stiles, president of Yale college, that he saw the trial of the steamboat made by John Fitch, and that it gave satisfaction to all the spectators; David Rittenhouse, the celebrated astronomer, Prof. Andrew Elliott, of the Episcopal academy, and Dr. John Ewing, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, all wrote certificates that the boat, operated by steam alone, moved against wind and tide with a very considerable degree of velocity, and that the theory thus reduced to practice must be of vast benefit to the human race.

This craft, with a twelve-inch cylinder, however, was too small for practical purposes, and after many delays a longer boat with the same machinery and paddles at the stern, was built and set out on a trip to Burlington. It went well until it came opposite the town within twenty or thirty rods of the wharf, when the boiler sprang a leak and they were compelled to anchor in the stream. With the next tide they got the disabled vessel back to Philadelphia. An account of this first long voyage of the steamer was prepared in 1855 from reminiscences of old persons, who lived along the Delaware, and who witnessed it at various places on the route. The following are a few extracts from this narrative:

"Crowds of persons assembled at all the prominent points along the river to see her pass, and waited for hours to witness what was then the greatest wonder of the day. At Point-no-Point, now Bridesburg, the whole population of Frankford and the upper end of Philadelphia county were gathered, and they saw the boat slowly steam by them on her upward progress. Great indeed was their enthusiasm and long and loudly did they cheer the grotesque exhibition. Women waved their handkerchiefs in approbation. Bateaux put off from shore and rowed alongside the steamer, cheering the adventurous and now exulting Fitch.

"At Dunk Ferry a similar demonstration took place. A vast concourse of people had collected there from the interior of Bucks county to see the passing of the new wonder. Loud cheers greeted her as she approached, and a cannon, one of those which Gen. Reed had vainly endeavored to carry across the Delaware on the night of Washington's masterly surprise at Trenton, and which by some oversight had been left behind, was hastily loaded and discharged in honor of the discoverer of navigation by steam."

The accident to the boiler was soon remedied, other improvements were effected, and the boat made several voyages to and from Burlington without mishap, at the rate of four or five miles an hour. In a trip made on October 12, 1788, thirty passengers were on board, and a few days later a number of distinguished gentlemen were carried, among whom was Captain John Hart, of the 1st U. S. Infantry, who certified that they moved at least four miles an hour and that the same force applied to a boat would move it against the current of the Ohio, Mississippi and other Western rivers at a similar speed.

But this did not satisfy Fitch. To make his invention useful, more power and greater velocity must be developed. By this time a majority of the members of the company became dissatisfied at the repeated calls for money and withdrew from the concern. Voight also, the inventor's tried and skilled friend, pleaded the wants of his own family and his personal affairs, which had been too much neglected, and abandoned the work. But the patient genius was not entirely discouraged. He organized a new company; an engine with an eighteen-inch cylinder was constructed; various changes, improvements and experiments were made, and the velocity was augmented, but it was still not great enough for a river packet. New exertions were put forth during the spring of 1790, and the tireless enthusiast had the satisfaction during the summer of that year of being able to go at the rate of eight miles an hour, and to pass all the sailing vessels that competed with him. The boat afterwards went eighty miles in a day and was run as a regular passenger steam packet. Advertisements are found in the *Federal Gazette* and other newspapers of 1790 announcing the days of leaving Philadelphia and extending through the months of June, July, August and September. The first notice is the following:

"The steamboat is now ready to take passengers, and it is intended to set off from Arch street ferry, in Philadelphia, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, for Burlington, Bristol, Bordentown and Trenton; to return on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Price for passengers, 2 shillings and sixpence, 33 cents to Burlington and Bristol; 2 shillings and 9 pence to Bordentown, and 5 shillings to Trenton, June 14, 1790."

It was advertised also to run at various times to Gray's Ferry, Christian Bridge, Chester and Wilmington. Counting up

the lengths of all the trips it made that summer, it must have run between two and three thousand miles. Lewis Rue and John Shaffer gave a certificate that they set out from Philadelphia June 5, 1790, at four o'clock in the morning and went in the steamboat to Trenton and thence to Lambertville and back to the city in the afternoon, at a speed of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. Fulton's boat, the "Clermont," seventeen years afterwards, in 1807, occupied thirty-two hours in a distance of 150 miles, or four and three-quarter miles an hour; Fitch's boat was, therefore, superior in speed to Fulton's, and would have reached Albany fifty-two miles in advance! Yet Fulton is generally called the inventor of steam navigation.

Fitch and his company commenced another boat, "The Perseverance," but it was never finished. While lying at the wharf in Kensington, a northeast storm drove it from its moorings and drifted it on Petty's island, where it remained fast several days. Other hindrances retarded the work, and winter set in before it was completed. The next year, 1791, was consumed in efforts to raise money and improve the machinery. But funds came in slowly, the friends of the unfortunate projector became discouraged and indifferent, and in 1792 the attempt to complete the second boat was abandoned altogether, and in 1795 it was sold in part to the highest bidder at public vendue.

Several causes conspired to prevent Fitch from bringing to a successful and profitable issue the attempt to introduce steam navigation. One was the low state of the mechanic arts in this country. No steam engine had ever been built here, and but few were in operation in the whole land. It was difficult to obtain necessary iron or steel castings and a large part of the work had to be done by ordinary blacksmiths, unskilled in such work. Fitch himself was poor, without influential friends, except those whom he secured by his own industry, perseverance, and mechanical genius. The period was unpropitious. It was just after the close of the Revolutionary war, when money was scarce, and the people generally impoverished by their sacrifices for liberty, were with difficulty persuaded to contribute to a venture, concerning the ultimate success of which they were doubtful. Sea captains, the owners of boats and sailing vessels

and all interested in prevailing modes of carrying on commerce, were jealous of the innovation, which threatened to diminish their profits, and derided and scoffed at his scheme. It was only by wonderful energy and determination, united with countless faith in the feasibility and vast importance of his plan, that enabled him to reach the measure of success he actually attained. He demonstrated practically and fully that navigable waters could be traversed by steam, but circumstances beyond his control prevented the introduction of his invention into general use at that early day.

His claim to priority has never been refuted. The thought of a steamboat first came to him in April, 1785. In August of the same year he presented a memorial to the Continental Congress for encouragement and in September he applied for aid to the Spanish minister, then in New York. In December he asked for assistance from the Legislature of Pennsylvania. In 1786 the Assembly of New Jersey passed an act giving him exclusive right for 14 years to navigate all the waters of the state by fire and steam, and in 1787 similar acts were adopted in his favor by the Assemblies of Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York and Virginia.

The legislative bodies would not have given him this right unless they had been convinced that his claims were unimpeachable. Committees in each listened to his statements, investigated their truth and reported in his favor, and their recommendations were adopted, which is testimony of the strongest kind that his invention was prior to that of any other individual, and that he was the original projector of the most important and valuable improvement ever made in navigation.

In February, 1786, nearly a year after Fitch conceived his plan, he applied to Arthur Donaldson, of Philadelphia, an ingenious man possessed of some pecuniary means, for assistance, and asked him to become a partner with himself in the enterprise. Donaldson hesitated and said he would consult a friend and let him know his decision later. In this interview Fitch declares that Donaldson did not hint that he had ever thought of using steam as a power in propelling boats, yet a few months afterwards Donaldson asserted that he had contrived a way for

driving boats by steam, and intended to apply to the Pennsylvania Legislature for the sole right to the machine. The Legislature considered the merits of both in respect to originality and the next year decided in favor of Fitch. It does not appear that Donaldson ever thought of steam in connection with boats till the idea had been suggested to him by Fitch, yet he pretended that the credit of the discovery should be awarded to him.

James Rumsey, of Virginia, likewise pretended to the honor of the invention, but the evidence shows that his claims were fallacious. He did indeed experiment in 1784 to get a boat made which would be worked by a machine with poles, set in motion by hand. But he did not intimate that he expected to use steam as the power till many months after Fitch had applied to more than one legislative body for a patent right, and his claims had been heard of in all parts of the country. Fitch first learned that Rumsey said he had invented a steamboat in October, 1787, more than two years after Fitch began his experiments. During all that time Rumsey had been planning a mechanical boat, to run by hand or horse power, and it had not occurred to him that steam could be employed until the idea was suggested by the persevering exertions of the skillful artisan in Pennsylvania.

After the failure to complete the third large boat, "The Perseverance," Fitch remained for some time in Philadelphia without funds, sad and despondent. Much of his time was passed in writing his autobiography, which was comprised in six manuscript volumes. In them he gives an account of the events of his life and of his arduous and checkered experience with the steamboat. He deposited them in 1792 with the Philadelphia Library Company, requesting that they be not opened till 1823, at the expiration of thirty years. The whole work is addressed to Rev. Nathaniel Irwin, pastor at Neshaminy, for whom he entertained the highest veneration and the warmest regard. The early education of Fitch was very limited, and in his writings, grammar, orthography, spelling and punctuation are constantly violated, but his style is forcible and vivid, and displays far more than ordinary intellectual gifts.

In 1793 he went to France, under the direction of a company

of gentlemen, with a view to building steamboats there, but the French Revolution was agitating the country when he arrived, no funds could be secured, his own means were soon exhausted, and after tarrying a while in England, he returned to the United States, working his passage as a common sailor. For two years he remained with his relatives in New England, and in 1796 he fitted a small steam engine in a ship's yawl in New York city, and ran it on a little pond called the "Collects," now filled, on the site of which the "Tombs" prison is built. Robert Fulton and Robert R. Livingston were several times on this craft with Fitch, while it was in motion, who explained to them the workings of the machinery. It was propelled by a screw propeller, and steered by an oar. Fulton, instead of being an originator, was taught by Fitch, but he was more fortunate in possessing in Livingston a wealthy friend.

Fitch had been revolving in his mind for a considerable time a journey to Kentucky to look up lands which he still owned there, and to form a company to build steamboats for the Western rivers. In 1797 he repaired to that region, which he had traversed repeatedly with his surveying instruments when it was occupied only by savages and wild beasts. But he found that no steamboat company could be organized, and that his lands were over-run by squatters. To eject them he was obliged to engage in vexatious lawsuits. To pay his board bill he had to transfer his title to some of his lands to the keeper of the hotel. He had become addicted to intemperate habits by resorting to the bottle for comfort and cheer in his misfortunes, and at last, when he saw no prospect of realizing the vision of his life, he took opium with fatal effect, and passed intentionally into the dreamless sleep of death at Bardstown, Kentucky, somewhere between the 25th of June and the 18th of July, 1798, being in the 56th year of his age. Only a rough unhewn stone marks his grave in the cemetery of that distant village. But a monument ought to be erected over it, on which should be inscribed his prophetic words, "The day will come when some more potent man will get fame and riches from my invention. This will be the mode of crossing the Atlantic in time, whether I shall bring it to perfection or not."