Claude De Jouffroy D'abbans Encyclopedia Article

Claude De Jouffroy D'abbans

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BOOKRAGS

Contents

Claude De Jouffroy D'abbans Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Claude De Jouffroy D'abbans.....3

Claude De Jouffroy D'abbans

1751-1832

French engineer who in 1783 launched the first experimentally successful steam-powered boat. Equipped with a double ratchet mechanism that produced continuous rotation of the paddle wheels, Jouffroy d'Abbans's vessel, the *Pyroscaphe,* ran against the current of the Saône River for 15 minutes. Jouffroy d'Abbans's success was marred by failure, however, when his patent was indefinitely delayed and he abandoned his experiments. In 1787 American Robert Fulton developed a more successful steamboat. Although he gave much credit to Jouffroy d'Abbans, the French inventor died bitter and forgotten.