

Archibald Gracie

THE TRUTH ABOUT  
THE  
TITANIC



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# **The Truth About the Titanic**

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# CHAPTER I

## THE LAST DAY ABOARD SHIP

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"There is that Leviathan." - Ps. 104:26.

As the sole survivor of all the men passengers of the *Titanic* stationed during the loading of six or more lifeboats with women and children on the port side of the ship, forward on the glass-sheltered Deck A, and later on the Boat Deck above it, it is my duty to bear testimony to the heroism on the part of all concerned. First, to my men companions who calmly stood by until the lifeboats had departed loaded with women and the available complement of crew, and who, fifteen to twenty minutes later, sank with the ship, conscious of giving up their lives to save the weak and the helpless.

Second, to Second Officer Lightoller and his ship's crew, who did their duty as if similar occurrences were matters of daily routine; and thirdly, to the women, who showed no sign of fear or panic whatsoever under conditions more appalling than were ever recorded before in the history of disasters at sea.

I think those of my readers who are accustomed to tales of thrilling adventure will be glad to learn first-hand of the heroism displayed on the *Titanic* by those to whom it is my privilege and sad duty to pay this tribute. I will confine the details of my narrative for the most part to what I personally saw, and did, and heard during that never-to-be-forgotten

maiden trip of the *Titanic*, which ended with shipwreck and her foundering about 2.22 a.m., Monday, April 15, 1912, after striking an iceberg 'in or near latitude 41 degrees, 46 minutes N., longitude 50 degrees, 14 minutes W., North Atlantic Ocean,' whereby the loss of 1490 lives ensued.

On Sunday morning, April 14th, this marvellous ship, the perfection of all vessels hitherto conceived by the brain of man, had, for three and one-half days, proceeded on her way from Southampton to New York over a sea of glass, so level it appeared, without encountering a ripple brought on the surface of the water by a storm.

The Captain had each day improved upon the previous day's speed, and prophesied that, with continued fair weather, we should make an early arrival record for this maiden trip. But his reckoning never took into consideration that Protean monster of the Northern seas which, even before this, had been so fatal to the navigator's calculations and so formidable a weapon of destruction.

Our explorers have pierced to the furthest north and south of the icebergs' retreat, but the knowledge of their habitat, insuring our great ocean liners in their successful efforts to elude them, has not reached the detail of time and place where they become detached and obstruct their path.

In the twenty-four hours' run ending the 14th, according to the posted reckoning, the ship had covered 546 miles, and we were told that the next twenty-four hours would see even a better record made.

Towards evening the report, which I heard, was spread that wireless messages from passing steamers had been received advising the officers of our ship to the presence of

icebergs and ice-floes. The increasing cold and the necessity of being more warmly clad when appearing on deck were outward and visible signs in corroboration of these warnings. But despite them all no diminution of speed was indicated and the engines kept up their steady running.

Not for fifty years, the old sailors tell us, had so great a mass of ice and icebergs at this time of the year been seen so far south.

The pleasure and comfort which all of us enjoyed upon this floating palace, with its extraordinary provisions for such purposes, seemed an ominous feature to many of us, including myself, who felt it almost too good to last without some terrible retribution inflicted by the hand of an angry omnipotence. Our sentiment in this respect was voiced by one of the most able and distinguished of our fellow passengers, Mr. Charles M. Hays, President of the Canadian Grand Trunk Railroad. Engaged as he then was in studying and providing the hotel equipment along the line of new extensions to his own great railroad system, the consideration of the subject and of the magnificence of the *Titanic's* accommodations was thus brought home to him. This was the prophetic utterance with which, alas, he sealed his fate a few hours thereafter: 'The White Star, the Cunard and the Hamburg-American lines,' said he, 'are now devoting their attention to a struggle for supremacy in obtaining the most luxurious appointments for their ships, but the time will soon come when the greatest and most appalling of all disasters at sea will be the result.'

In the various trips which I have made across the Atlantic, it has been my custom aboard ship, whenever the

weather permitted, to take as much exercise every day as might be needful to put myself in prime physical condition, but on board the *Titanic*, during the first days of the voyage, from Wednesday to Saturday, I had departed from this, my usual self-imposed regimen, for during this interval I had devoted my time to social enjoyment and to the reading of books taken from the ship's well-supplied library. I enjoyed myself as if I were in a summer palace on the seashore, surrounded with every comfort – there was nothing to indicate or suggest that we were on the stormy Atlantic Ocean. The motion of the ship and the noise of its machinery were scarcely discernible on deck or in the saloons, either day or night. But when Sunday morning came, I considered it high time to begin my customary exercises, and determined for the rest of the voyage to patronize the squash racquet court, the gymnasium, the swimming pool, etc. I was up early before breakfast and met the professional racquet player in a half hour's warming up, preparatory for a swim in the six-foot deep tank of salt water, heated to a refreshing temperature. In no swimming bath had I ever enjoyed such pleasure before. How curtailed that enjoyment would have been had the presentiment come to me telling how near it was to being my last plunge, and that before dawn of another day I would be swimming for my life in mid-ocean, under water and on the surface, in a temperature of 28 degrees Fahrenheit!

Impressed on my memory as if it were but yesterday, my mind pictures the personal appearance and recalls the conversation which I had with each of these employees of the ship. The racquet professional, F. Wright, was a clean-

cut, typical young Englishman, similar to hundreds I have seen and with whom I have played, in bygone years, my favourite game of cricket, which has done more than any other sport for my physical development. I have not seen his name mentioned in any account of the disaster, and therefore take this opportunity of speaking of him, for I am perhaps the only survivor able to relate anything about his last days on earth.

Hundreds of letters have been written to us survivors, many containing photographs for identification of some lost loved one, whom perchance we may have seen or talked to before he met his fate. To these numerous inquiries I have been able to reply satisfactorily only in rare instances. The next and last time I saw Wright was on the stairway of Deck C within three-quarters of an hour after the collision. I was going to my cabin when I met him on the stairs going up. 'Hadn't we better cancel that appointment for tomorrow morning?' I said rather jocosely to him. 'Yes,' he replied, but did not stop to tell me what he then must have known of the conditions in the racquet court on G Deck, which, according to other witnesses, had at that time become flooded. His voice was calm, without enthusiasm, and perhaps his face was a little whiter than usual.

To the swimming pool attendant I also made promise to be on hand earlier the next morning, but I never saw him again.

One of the characters of the ship, best known to us all, was the gymnasium instructor, T.W. McCawley. He, also, expected me to make my first appearance for real good exercise on the morrow, but alas, he, too, was swallowed up



by the sea. How well we survivors all remember this sturdy little man in white flannels and with his broad English accent! With what tireless enthusiasm he showed us the many mechanical devices under his charge and urged us to take advantage of the opportunity of using them, going through the motions of bicycle racing, rowing, boxing, camel and horseback riding, etc.

Such was my morning's preparation for the unforeseen physical exertions I was compelled to put forth for dear life at midnight, a few hours later. Could any better training for the terrible ordeal have been planned?

The exercise and the swim gave me an appetite for a hearty breakfast. Then followed the church service in the dining saloon, and I remember how much I was impressed with the 'Prayer for those at Sea,' also the words of the hymn, which we sang, No. 418 of the Hymnal. About a fortnight later, when I next heard it sung, I was in the little church at Smithtown, Long Island, attending the memorial service in honour of my old friend and fellow member of the Union Club, James Clinch Smith. To his sister, who sat next to me in the pew, I called attention to the fact that it was the last hymn we sang on this Sunday morning on board the *Titanic*. She was much affected, and gave the reason for its selection for the memorial service to her brother because it was known as Jim's favorite hymn, being the first piece set to music ever played by him as a child and for which he was rewarded with a promised prize, donated by his father.

What a remarkable coincidence that at the first and last ship's service on board the *Titanic*, the hymn we sang began with these impressive lines:

O God our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast  
And our eternal home.

One day was so like another that it is difficult to differentiate in our description all the details of this last day's incidents aboard ship.

The book that I finished and returned to the ship's library was Mary Johnston's 'Old Dominion.' While peacefully reading the tales of adventure and accounts of extraordinary escapes therein, how little I thought that in the next few hours I should be a witness and a party to a scene to which this book could furnish no counterpart, and that my own preservation from a watery grave would afford a remarkable illustration of how oftentimes 'truth is stranger than fiction.'

During this day I saw much of Mr. and Mrs. Isidor Straus. In fact, from the very beginning to the end of our trip on the *Titanic*, we had been together several times each day. I was with them on the deck the day we left Southampton and witnessed that ominous accident to the American liner, *New York*, lying at her pier, when the displacement of water by the movement of our gigantic ship caused a suction which pulled the smaller ship from her moorings and nearly caused a collision. At the time of this, Mr. Straus was telling me that it seemed only a few years back that he had taken passage on this same ship, the *New York*, on her maiden trip and when she was spoken of as the 'last word in shipbuilding.' He then called the attention of his wife and myself to the progress that had since been made, by

comparison of the two ships then lying side by side. During our daily talks thereafter, he related much of special interest concerning incidents in his remarkable career, beginning with his early manhood in Georgia when, with the Confederate Government Commissioners, as an agent for the purchase of supplies, he ran the blockade of Europe. His friendship with President Cleveland, and how the latter had honored him, were among the topics of daily conversation that interested me most.

On this Sunday, our last day aboard ship, he finished the reading of a book I had loaned him, in which he expressed intense interest. This book was 'The Truth About Chickamauga,' of which I am the author, and it was to gain a much-needed rest after several years of work thereon, and in order to get it off my mind, that I had taken this trip across the ocean and back. As a counter-irritant, my experience was a dose which was highly efficacious.

I recall how Mr. and Mrs. Straus were particularly happy about noon time on this same day in anticipation of communicating by wireless telegraphy with their son and his wife on their way to Europe on board the passing ship *Amerika*. Some time before six o'clock, full of contentment, they told me of the message of greeting received in reply. This last good-bye to their loved ones must have been a consoling thought when the end came a few hours thereafter.

That night after dinner, with my table companions, Messrs James Clinch Smith and Edward A. Kent, according to usual custom, we adjourned to the palm room, with many others, for the usual coffee at individual tables where we

listened to the always delightful music of the *Titanic's* band. On these occasions, full dress was always en règle; and it was a subject both of observation and admiration, that there were so many beautiful women – then especially in evidence – aboard the ship.

I invariably circulated around during these delightful evenings, chatting with those I knew, and with those whose acquaintance I had made during the voyage. I might specify names and particularize subjects of conversation, but the details, while interesting to those concerned, might not be so to all my readers. The recollections of those with whom I was thus closely associated in this disaster, including those who suffered the death from which I escaped and those who survived with me, will be a treasured memory and bond of union until my dying day. From the palm room, the men of my coterie would always go to the smoking room, and almost every evening join in conversation with some of the well-known men whom we met there, including within my own recollections Major Archie Butt, President Taft's Military Aid, discussing politics; Clarence Moore, of Washington, D.C., relating his venturesome trip some years ago through the West Virginia woods and mountains, helping a newspaper reporter in obtaining an interview with the outlaw, Captain Anse Hatfield; Frank D. Millet, the well-known artist, planning a journey west; Arthur Ryerson and others.

During these evenings I also conversed with Mr. John B. Thayer, Second Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and with Mr. George D. Widener, a son of the Philadelphia street-car magnate, Mr. P.A.B. Widener.



My stay in the smoking-room on this particular evening for the first time was short, and I retired early with my cabin steward Cullen's promise to awaken me betimes next morning to get ready for the engagements I had made before breakfast for the game of racquets, work in the gymnasium and the swim that was to follow.

I cannot regard it as a mere coincidence that on this particular Sunday night I was thus prompted to retire early for nearly three hours of invigorating sleep, whereas an accident occurring at midnight of any of the four preceding days would have found me mentally and physically tired. That I was thus strengthened for the terrible ordeal, better even that had I been forewarned of it, I regard on the contrary as the first provision for my safety (answering the constant prayers of those at home), made by the guardian angel to whose care I was entrusted during the series of miraculous escapes presently to be recorded.

## CHAPTER II

# STRUCK BY AN ICEBERG

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"Watchman, what of the night?" - Isaiah 21:11.

My stateroom was an outside one on Deck C on the starboard quarter, somewhat abaft amidships. It was No. C, 51. I was enjoying a good night's rest when I was aroused by a sudden shock and noise forward on the starboard side, which I at once concluded was caused by a collision, with some other ship perhaps. I jumped from my bed, turned on the electric light, glanced at my watch nearby on the dresser, which I had changed to agree with ship's time on the day before and which now registered twelve o'clock. Correct ship's time would make it about 11.45. I opened the door of my cabin, looked out into the corridor, but could not see or hear anyone - there was no commotion whatever; but immediately following the collision came a great noise of escaping steam. I listened intently, but could hear no machinery. There was no mistaking that something wrong had happened, because of the ship stopping and the blowing off of steam.

Removing my night clothing I dressed myself hurriedly in underclothing, shoes and stockings, trousers and a Norfolk coat. I give these details in order that some idea of the lapse of time may be formed by an account of what I did during the interval. From my cabin, through the corridor to the stairway was but a short distance, and I ascended to the

third deck above, that is, to the Boat Deck. I found here only one young lad, seemingly bent on the same quest as myself.

From the first cabin quarter, forward on the port side, we strained our eyes to discover what had struck us. From vantage points where the view was not obstructed by the lifeboats on this deck I sought the object, but in vain, though I swept the horizon near and far and discovered nothing.

It was a beautiful night, cloudless, and the stars shining brightly. The atmosphere was quite cold, but no ice or iceberg was in sight. If another ship had struck us there was no trace of it, and it did not yet occur to me that it was an iceberg with which we had collided. Not satisfied with a partial investigation, I made a complete tour of the deck, searching every point of the compass with my eyes. Going toward the stern, I vaulted over the iron gate and fence that divide the first and second cabin passengers. I disregarded the 'not allowed' notice. I looked about me towards the officers' quarters in expectation of being challenged for non-observance of rules. In view of the collision I had expected to see some of the ship's officers on the Boat Deck, but there was no sign of an officer anywhere, and no one from whom to obtain any information about what had happened. Making my tour of the Boat Deck, the only other beings I saw were a middle-aged couple of the second cabin promenading unconcernedly, arm in arm, forward on the starboard quarter, against the wind, the man in a gray overcoat and outing cap.

Having gained no satisfaction whatever, I descended to the glass-enclosed Deck A, port side, and looked over the

rail to see whether the ship was on an even keel, but I still could see nothing wrong. Entering the companionway, I passed Mr. Ismay with a member of the crew hurrying up the stairway. He wore a day suit, and, as usual, was hatless. He seemed too much preoccupied to notice anyone. Therefore I did not speak to him, but regarded his face very closely, perchance to learn from his manner how serious the accident might be. It occurred to me then that he was putting on as brave a face as possible so as to cause no alarm among the passengers.

At the foot of the stairway were a number of men passengers, and I now for the first time discovered that others were aroused as well as myself, among them my friend, Clinch Smith, from whom I first learned that an iceberg had struck us. He opened his hand and showed me some ice, flat like my watch, coolly suggesting that I might take it home for a souvenir. All of us will remember the way had had of cracking a joke without a smile. While we stood there, the story of the collision came to us – how someone in the smoking room, when the ship struck, rushed out to see what it was, and returning, told them that he had a glimpse of an iceberg towering fifty feet above Deck A, which, if true, would indicate a height of over one hundred feet. Here, too, I learned that the mail room was flooded and that the plucky postal clerks, in two feet of water, were at their posts. They were engaged in transferring to the upper deck, from the ship's post-office, the two hundred bags of registered mail containing four hundred thousand letters. The names of these men, who all sank with the ship, deserve to be recorded. They were: John S. Marsh, William L.



Gwynn, Oscar S. Woody, Iago Smith and E.D. Williamson. The first three were Americans, the others Englishmen, and the families of the former were provided for by their Government.

And now Clinch Smith and myself noticed a list on the floor of the companionway. We kept our own counsel about it, not wishing to frighten anyone or cause any unnecessary alarm, especially among the ladies, who then appeared upon the scene. We did not consider it our duty to express our individual opinion upon the serious character of the accident which now appealed to us with the greatest force. He and I resolved to stick together in the final emergency, united in the silent bond of friendship, and lend a helping hand to each other whenever required. I recall having in my mind's eye at this moment all that I had read and heard in days gone by about shipwrecks, and pictured Smith and myself clinging to an overloaded raft in an open sea with a scarcity of food and water. We agreed to visit our respective staterooms and join each other later. All possessions in my stateroom were hastily packed into three large travelling bags so that the luggage might be ready in the event of a hasty transfer to another ship.

Fortunately I put on my long Newmarket overcoat that reached below my knees, and as I passed from the corridor into the companionway my worst fears were confirmed. Men and women were slipping on life-preservers, the stewards assisting in adjusting them. Steward Cullen insisted upon my returning to my stateroom for mine. I did so and he fastened one on me while I brought out the other for use by someone else.

Out on Deck A, port side, towards the stern, many men and women had already collected. I sought and found the unprotected ladies to whom I had proffered my services during the voyage when they boarded the ship at Southampton, Mrs. E.D. Appleton, wife of my St. Paul's School friend and schoolmate; Mrs. R.C. Cornell, wife of the well-known New York Justice, and Mrs. J. Murray Brown, wife of the Boston publisher, all old friends of my wife. These three sisters were returning home from a sad mission abroad, where they had laid to rest the remains of a fourth sister, Lady Victor Drummond, of whose death I had read accounts in the London papers, and all the sad details connected therewith were told me by the sisters themselves. That they would have to pass through a still greater ordeal seemed impossible, and how little did I know of the responsibility I took upon myself for their safety! Accompanying them, also unprotected, was their friend, Miss Edith Evans, to whom they introduced me. Mr. and Mrs. Straus, Colonel and Mrs. Astor and others well known to me were among those here congregated on the port side of Deck A, including, besides Clinch Smith, two of our coterie of after-dinner companions, Hugh Woolner, son of the English sculptor, whose works are to be seen in Westminster Abbey, and H. Björnström Steffanson, the young lieutenant of the Swedish army, who, during the voyage, had told me of his acquaintance with Mrs. Gracie's relatives in Sweden.

It was now that the band began to play, and continued while the boats were being lowered. We considered this a wise provision tending to allay excitement. I did not recognize any of the tunes, but I know they were cheerful

and were not hymns. If, as has been reported, 'Nearer My God to Thee' was one of the selections, I assuredly should have noticed it and regarded it as a tactless warning of immediate death to us all and one likely to create a panic that our special efforts were directed towards avoiding, and which we accomplished to the fullest extent. I know of only two survivors whose names are cited by the newspapers as authority for the statement that this hymn was one of those played. On the other hand, all whom I have questioned or corresponded with, including the best qualified, testified emphatically to the contrary.

Our hopes were buoyed with the information, imparted through the ship's officers, that there had been an interchange of wireless messages with passing ships, one of which was certainly coming to our rescue. To reassure the ladies of whom I had assumed special charge, I showed them a bright white light of what I took to be a ship about five miles off and which I felt sure was coming to our rescue. Colonel Astor heard me telling this to them and he asked me to show it and I pointed the light out to him. In so doing we both had now to lean over the rail of the ship and look close in towards the bow, avoiding a lifeboat even then made ready with its gunwale lowered to the level of the floor of the Boat Deck above us and obstructing our view; but instead of growing brighter the light grew dim and less and less distinct and passed away altogether. The light, as I have since learned, with tearful regret for the lost who might have been saved, belonged to the steamer *Californian* of the Leyland line, Captain Stanley Lord, bound from

London to Boston. She belonged to the International Mercantile Marine Company, the owners of the *Titanic*.

This was the ship from which two of the six 'ice messages' were sent. The first one received and acknowledged by the *Titanic* was one at 7.30 p.m., an intercepted message to another ship. The next was about 11 p.m., when the Captain of the *Californian* saw a ship approaching from the eastward, which he was advised to be the *Titanic*, and under his orders this message was sent: 'We are stopped and surrounded by ice.' To this the *Titanic's* wireless operator brusquely replied, 'Shut up, I am busy. I am working Cape Race.' The business here referred to was the sending of wireless messages for passengers on the *Titanic*; and the stronger current of the *Californian* eastward interfered therewith. Though the navigation of the ship and the issues of life and death were at stake, the right of way was given to communication with Cape Race until within a few minutes of the *Titanic's* collision with the iceberg.

Nearly all this time, until 11.30 p.m., the wireless operator of the *Californian* was listening with 'phones on his head, but at 11.30 p.m., while the *Titanic* was still talking to Cape Race, the former ship's operator 'put the 'phones down, took off his clothes and turned in.'

The fate of thousands of lives hung in the balance many times that ill-omened night, but *the circumstances in connection with the S.S. Californian* (Br. Rep. pp. 43-46), furnish the evidence corroborating that of the American Investigation, viz., that it was not chance, but the grossest negligence alone which sealed the fate of all the noble lives, men and women, that were lost.

It appears from the evidence referred to, information in regard to which we learned after our arrival in New York, that the Captain of the *Californian* and his crew were watching our lights from the deck of their ship, which remained approximately stationary until 5.15 a.m. on the following morning. During this interval it is shown that they were never distant more than six or seven miles. In fact, at 12 o'clock, the *Californian* was only four or five miles off at the point and in the general direction where she was seen by myself and at least a dozen others, who bore testimony before the American Committee, from the decks of the *Titanic*. The white rockets which we sent up, referred to presently, were also plainly seen at the time. Captain Lord was completely in possession of the knowledge that he was in proximity to a ship in distress. He could have put himself into immediate communication with us by wireless had he desired confirmation of the name of the ship and the disaster which had befallen it. His indifference is made apparent by his orders to 'go on Morseing,' instead of utilizing the more modern method of the inventive genius and gentleman, Mr. Marconi, which eventually saved us all. 'The night was clear and the sea was smooth. The ice by which the *Californian* was surrounded,' says the British Report, 'was loose ice extending for a distance of not more than two or three miles in the direction of the *Titanic*.' When she first saw the rockets, the *Californian* could have pushed through the ice to the open water without any serious risk and so have come to the assistance of the *Titanic*. A discussion of this subject is the most painful of all others for those who lost their loved ones aboard our ship.

When we realized that the ship whose lights we saw was not coming towards us, our hopes of rescue were correspondingly depressed, but the men's counsel to preserve calmness prevailed; and to reassure the ladies they repeated the much advertised fiction of 'the unsinkable ship' on the supposed highest qualified authority. It was at this point that Miss Evans related to me the story that years ago in London she had been told by a fortune-teller to 'beware of water,' and now 'she knew she would be drowned.' My efforts to persuade her to the contrary were futile. Though she gave voice to her story, she presented no evidence whatever of fear, and when I saw and conversed with her an hour later when conditions appeared especially desperate, and the last lifeboat was supposed to have departed, she was perfectly calm and did not revert again to the superstitious tale.

From my own conclusions, and those of others, it appears that about forty-five minutes had now elapsed since the collision when Captain Smith's orders were transmitted to the crew to lower the lifeboats, loaded with women and children first. The self-abnegation of Mr. and Mrs. Isidor Straus here shone forth heroically when she promptly and emphatically exclaimed: 'No! I will not be separated from my husband; as we have lived, so will we die together;' and when he, too, declined the assistance proffered on my earnest solicitation that, because of his age and helplessness, exception should be made and he be allowed to accompany his wife in the boat. 'No!' he said, 'I do not wish any distinction in my favor which is not granted to others.' As near as I can recall them these were the words

which they addressed to me. They expressed themselves as fully prepared to die, and calmly sat down in steamer chairs on the glass-enclosed Deck A, prepared to meet their fate. Further entreaties to make them change their decision were of no avail. Later they moved to the Boat Deck above, accompanying Mrs. Straus's maid, who entered a lifeboat.

When the order to load the boats was received I had promptly moved forward with the ladies in my charge toward the boats then being lowered from the Boat Deck above to Deck A on the port side of the ship, where we then were. A tall, slim young Englishman, Sixth Officer J.P. Moody, whose name I learned later, with other members of the ship's crew, barred the progress of us men passengers any nearer to the boats. All that was left me was then to consign these ladies in my charge to the protection of the ship's officer, and I thereby was relieved of their responsibility and felt sure that they would be safely loaded in the boats at this point. I remember a steward rolling a small barrel out of the door of the companionway. 'What have you there?' said I. 'Bread for the lifeboats,' was his quick and cheery reply, as I passed inside the ship for the last time, searching for two of my table companions, Mrs. Churchill Candee of Washington and Mr. Edward A. Kent. It was then that I met Wright, the racquet player, and exchanged the few words on the stairway already related.

Considering it well to have a supply of blankets for use in the open boats exposed to the cold, I concluded, while passing, to make another, and my last, descent to my stateroom for this purpose, only to find it locked, and on asking the reason why was told by some other steward than

Cullen that it was done 'to prevent looting.' Advising him of what was wanted, I went with him to the cabin stewards' quarters nearby, where extra blankets were stored, and where I obtained them. I then went the length of the ship inside on this glass-enclosed Deck A from aft, forwards, looking in every room and corner for my missing table companions, but no passengers whatever were to be seen except in the smoking room, and there all alone by themselves, seated around a table, were four men, three of whom were personally well known to me, Major Butt, Clarence Moore and Frank Millet, but the fourth was a stranger, whom I therefore cannot identify. All four seemed perfectly oblivious of what was going on on the decks outside. It is impossible to suppose that they did not know of the collision with an iceberg and that the room they were in had been deserted by all others, who had hastened away. It occurred to me at the time that these men desired to show their entire indifference to the danger and that if I advised them as to how seriously I regarded it, they would laugh at me. This was the last I ever saw of any of them, and I know of no one who testifies to seeing them later, except a lady who mentions having seen Major Butt on the bridge five minutes before the last boat left the ship. There is no authentic story of what they did when the water reached this deck, and their ultimate fate is only a matter of conjecture. That they went down in the ship on this Deck A, when the steerage passengers (as described later) blocked the way to the deck above, is my personal belief, founded on the following facts, to wit: First, that neither I nor anyone else, so far as I know, ever saw any of them on the Boat



Deck, and second, that the bodies of none of them were ever recovered, indicating the possibility that all went down inside the ship or the enclosed deck.

I next find myself forward on the port side, part of the time on the Boat Deck, and part on the deck below it, called Deck A, where I rejoined Clinch Smith, who reported that Mrs. Candee had departed on one of the boats. We remained together until the ship went down. I was on the Boat Deck when I saw and heard the first rocket, and then successive ones sent up at intervals thereafter. These were followed by the Morse red and blue lights, which were signalled near by us on the deck where we were; but we looked in vain for any response. These signals of distress indicated to every one of us that the ship's fate was sealed, and that she might sink before the lifeboats could be lowered.

And now I am on Deck A again, where I helped in the loading of two boats lowered from the deck above. There were twenty boats in all on the ship: 14 wooden lifeboats, each thirty feet long by nine feet one inch broad, constructed to carry sixty-five persons each; 2 wooden cutters, emergency boats, twenty-five feet two inches long by seven feet two inches broad, constructed to carry forty persons each; and 4 Engelhardt 'surfboats' with canvas collapsible sides extending above the gunwales, twenty-five feet five inches long by eight feet broad, constructed to carry forty-seven persons each. The lifeboats were ranged along the ship's rail, or its prolongation forward and aft on the Boat Deck, the odd numbered on the starboard and the even numbered on the port side. Two of the Engelhardt

boats were on the Boat Deck forward beneath the Emergency boats suspended on davits above. The other Engelhardt boats were on the roof of the officers' house forward of the first funnel. They are designated respectively by the letters, A. B. C. D; A and C on the starboard, B and D on the port sides. They have a rounded bottom like a canoe. The name 'collapsible boat' generally applied has given rise to mistaken impressions in regard to them, because of the adjustable canvas sides above-mentioned.

At this quarter I was no longer held back from approaching near the boats, but my assistance and work as one of the crew in the loading of boats and getting them away as quickly as possible were accepted, for there was now no time to spare. The Second Officer, Lightoller, was in command on the port side forward, where I was. One of his feet was planted in the lifeboat, and the other on the rail of Deck A, while we, through the wood frames of the lowered glass windows on this deck, passed women, children, and babies in rapid succession without any confusion whatsoever. Among this number was Mrs. Astor, whom I lifted over the four-feet high rail of the ship through the frame. Her husband held her left arm as we carefully passed her to Lightoller, who seated her in the boat. A dialogue now ensued between Colonel Astor and the officer, every word of which I listened to with intense interest. Astor was close to me in the adjoining window-frame, to the left of mine. Leaning out over the rail he asked permission of Lightoller to enter the boat to protect his wife, which, in view of her delicate condition, seems to have been a reasonable request, but the officer, intent upon his duty, and obeying

orders, and not knowing the millionaire from the rest of us, replied: 'No, sir, no men are allowed in these boats until women are loaded first.' Colonel Astor did not demur, but bore the refusal bravely and resignedly, simply asking the number of the boat to help find his wife later in case he also was rescued. 'Number 4,' was Lightoller's reply. Nothing more was said. Colonel Astor moved away from this point and I never saw him again. I do not for a moment believe the report that he attempted to enter, or did enter, a boat and it is evident that if any such thought occurred to him at all it must have been at this present time and in this boat with his wife. Second Officer Lightoller recalled the incident perfectly when I reminded him of it. It was only through me that Colonel Astor's identity was established in his mind. 'I assumed,' said he, 'that I was asked to give the number of the lifeboat as the passenger intended, for some unknown cause, to make complaint about me.' From the fact that I never saw Colonel Astor on the Boat Deck later, and also because his body, when found, was crushed (according to the statement of one who saw it at Halifax, Mr. Harry K. White, of Boston, Mr. Edward A. Kent's brother-in-law, my schoolmate and friend from boyhood), I am of the opinion that he met his fate on the ship when the boilers tore through it, as described later.

One of the incidents I recall when loading the boats at this point was my seeing a young woman clinging tightly to a baby in her arms as she approached near the ship's high rail, but unwilling even for a moment to allow anyone else to hold the little one while assisting her to board the lifeboat. As she drew back sorrowfully to the outer edge of the crowd

on the deck, I followed and persuaded her to accompany me to the rail again, promising if she would entrust the baby to me I would see that the officer passed it to her after she got aboard. I remember her trepidation as she acceded to my suggestion and the happy expression of relief when the mother was safely seated with the baby restored to her. 'Where is my baby?' was her anxious wail. 'I have your baby,' I cried, as it was tenderly handed along. I remember this incident well because of my feeling at the time, when I had the babe in my care; though the interval was short, I wondered how I should manage with it in my arms if the lifeboats got away and I should be plunged into the water with it as the ship sank.

According to Lightoller's testimony before the Senate Committee he put twenty to twenty-five women, with two seamen to row, in the first boat and thirty, with two seamen, in the second.

Our labors in loading the boats were now shifted to the Boat Deck above, where Clinch Smith and I, with others, followed Lightoller and the crew. On this deck some difficulty was experienced in getting the boats ready to lower. Several causes may have contributed to this, viz., lack of drill and insufficient number of seamen for such emergency, or because of the new tackle not working smoothly. We had the hardest time with the Engelhardt boat, lifting and pushing it towards and over the rail. My shoulders and the whole weight of my body were used in assisting the crew at this work. Lightoller's testimony tells us that as the situation grew more serious he began to take chances and in loading the third boat he filled it up as full as