

Account by Marshall Drew

'When the 'Titanic' struck the iceberg at 11.40 pm, I was in bed. However, for whatever reason I was awake and remember the jolt and cessation of motion. A steward knocked on the stateroom door and directed us to get dressed, put on life preservers and go to the boat deck, which we did. There was a watertight compartment next to our stateroom. As we left it was closed. I remember the steward as we passed was trying to arouse passengers who had locked themselves in for the night. Elevators were not running. We walked up to the boat deck. All was calm and orderly. An officer was in charge. 'Women and children first,' he said, as he directed lifeboat number 11 to be filled. there were many tearful farewells. We and Uncle Jim said 'goodbye.' Waiting on deck before this I could hear the ship's orchestra playing somewhere off to first class. Lifeboat number 11 was near the stern. I will never forget that as I looked over my right shoulder, (the) steerage (promenade area) was blacked out. It made an impression I never forgot. Now I know from reading that lifeboat 11 was the only lifeboat filled to capacity. The lowering of the lifeboat 70ft to the sea was perilous. Davits, ropes, nothing worked properly, so that first one end of the lifeboat was tilted up and then far down. I think it was the only time I was scared. Lifeboats pulled some distance away from the sinking 'Titanic', afraid of what the suction might do. I am always annoyed at artists' depictions of the sinking of 'Titanic'. I've never seen one that came anywhere near the truth. There might have been the slightest ocean swell but it was dead calm. Stars there may have been, but the blackness of the night was so intense one could not see anything like a horizon. As row by row of the porthole lights of the 'Titanic' sank into the sea this was about all one could see. When the 'Titanic' upended to sink, all was blacked out until the tons of machinery crashed to the bow. This sounded like an explosion which of course it was not. As this happened hundreds of people were thrown into the sea. It isn't likely I shall ever forget the screams of those people as they perished in the water said to be 28 degrees. The reader will have to understand that at this point in my life I was being brought up as a typical British kid. You were not allowed to cry. You were a 'little man'. So! as a cool kid I lay down in the bottom of the lifeboat and went to sleep. When I awoke it was broad daylight as we approached the 'Carpathia'. Looking around over the gunwale it seemed to me like the Arctic. Icebergs of huge size ringed the horizon for 360 degrees.'

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