

# British Wreck Commissioner's Inquiry

## Day 11

### Testimony of Robert W. Pusey

Source : <http://www.titanicinquiry.org/BOTInq/BOTIndx02.php>

Examined by Mr. RAYMOND ASQUITH.

13093. Is your name Robert William Pusey?

- Yes.

13094. Were you a fireman on the "Titanic"?

- Yes.

13095. Were you in this emergency boat No. 1?

- I was in that boat.

13096. Did you hear any orders given as to what you were to do when the boat was lowered?

- Yes.

13097. What?

- I heard the orders given to the coxswain to push off clear of the ship; that is all I heard, and the last words I heard the Officer say - which one I could not tell you - was "See that the boat's crew do what you tell them."

13098. How far did you row away from the ship?

- About 200 yards, I should say.

13099. Did you then stop?

- Yes, we lay on our oars.

13100. Did you see the ship go down from that point?

- Yes, but not very clearly.

13101. Where were you sitting in the boat?

- I was next opposite miss Frank. [Francatelli]

13102. Miss Francatelli?

- I could not tell you her name.

13103. Which thwart was that on?

- There was Symons, Miss Frank [Francatelli], a gentleman and myself, and the gentleman looking forward and I was looking aft - on the second thwart from aft that was.

13104. After the ship went down, did you hear any cries?

- I did.

13105. How long did they continue?

- I should say about a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes, something like that.

13106. While those cries went on were you standing still the whole time or did you begin to row again?

- No, I believe we were lying on our oars.

13107. All the time the cries went on?

- Yes, as far as I can recollect.

13108. Did anybody in the boat say anything about the cries?

- Not in my estimation; I cannot bring it to recollection.

13109. Did anybody suggest that you should go back in the direction of the cries?

- Not to my knowledge.

13110. Did you hear anything said at all about the cries?

- I did not.

13111. Or about going back?

- No.

13112. Did you remain stationary for about - I think you said - 20 minutes?

- Near about 20 minutes, I should say; it may have been longer or it may have been shorter.
- 26 13113. What did you do then?  
- We cruised about after that, and then we saw this light, and we rowed for the light, and we came in contact with two more boats. They hailed us and asked if we had an Officer on board, and we said, "No." They said, "Are you all right?" and we said, "Yes."
- 27 13114. When you began rowing you said that you rowed for the light?  
- Yes.
- 28 13115. You did not make any attempt to row back in the direction where you thought the "Titanic" had sunk?  
- I do not think we did.
- 29 Examined by Mr. SCANLAN.
- 30 13116. Did you hear any passengers say that the boat was a small one, and that there was danger in going back?  
- Nothing.
- 31 Examined by Mr. HARBINSON.
- 32 13117. Do you remember hearing anything said in the emergency boat about presents or about money?  
- Yes, I did.
- 33 13118. That is to say you do not remember any conversation about going back to where the cries were?  
- No.
- 34 13119. But you remember the conversation about the money?  
- Yes. I do, and I will explain to you how it came about too. Lady Gordon said to Miss Franks, "There is your beautiful nightdress gone," and I said, "Never mind about your nightdress madam, as long as you have got your life"; and then I heard someone forward at the fore end of me say - I said we had lost our kits and that our pay was stopped from the time she was a wreck - "We will give you a little to start a new kit." That was all I heard.
- 35 Examined by Mr. CLEMENT EDWARDS.
- 36 13120. When was this said?  
- After the "Titanic" was a wreck, after everything was quiet.
- 37 13121. How long would that be?  
- About 3 o'clock in the morning because we were rowing for the light when this was said.
- 38 13122. Had things become quiet before 3 o'clock?  
- Yes, we were rowing for this light half-an-hour or more.
- 39 13123. Just be careful for a moment will you and follow my question: How long after the "Titanic" went down did you first hear mention of this money?  
- I should say three quarters of an hour.
- 40 13124. Had the cries stopped then?  
- Yes.
- 41 13125. Had you hailed the other boats then?  
- Yes; they hailed us first and we answered them.
- 42 13126. Could you see what the numbers of the boats were that hailed you?  
- I could not say, and I do not know them; it was dark.
- 43 13127. Did either one of them ask you what room you had in your boat?  
- Nothing whatever; I never heard that mentioned.
- 44 13128. Were you asked at any time during the night before you got to the "Carpathia" if you had room in your boat?  
- Not to my knowledge.
- 45 13129. You had a lot of room in your boat?  
- I should say we had enough room for another dozen.
- 46 13130. Did you make any suggestion about going back to pick up the drowning?  
- No.

- 47 13131. Did it occur to you at all that you ought to go back?  
- No, it was not my place; I was not in charge of the boat; if that had been said I would certainly have gone back with the remainder.
- 48 13132. You were ready and willing to go back?  
- Quite willing.
- 49 13133. But you did not think it your place to suggest it?  
- No.
- 50 13134. Were you not surprised that somebody else did not suggest it?  
- Yes, I was.
- 51 13135. Did you express your surprise to any body?  
- No.
- 52 13136. Was there any suggestion made that you should go and join the other boats?  
- Yes.
- 53 13137. (*The Commissioner.*) I do not understand your frame of mind. You were surprised that no one made the suggestion that your boat should go back?  
- Yes.
- 54 13138. Then were you surprised that you did not make the suggestion?  
- No.
- 55 13139. Then you were surprised that no one else made the suggestion, but you were not surprised that you did not make it?  
- No.
- 56 13140. It is a curious state of mind?  
- We were half-dazed at the time, all of us on a job like that.
- 57 13141. (*Mr. Clement Edwards.*) Can you offer any explanation at all as to why your boat did not go back and try to pick up people?  
- Yes, she would have been swamped if she had gone back; that is my opinion about it.
- 58 13142. What reason have you for saying that you would have been swamped if you had gone back?  
- I hardly understand you.
- 59 13143. You say that if you had gone back you would have been swamped?  
- Yes.
- 60 13144. What reason have you for saying that you would have been swamped if you had gone back?  
- I meant to say that there were so many people in the water; you could hear that by the cries.
- 61 13145. Did anybody say in the boat that they were altogether?  
- No.
- 62 13146. Did anybody say it was dangerous?  
- No.
- 63 13147. Did anybody say that you might be swamped?  
- No.
- 64 13148. Does it not occur to you now that you might very well have gone back?  
- No.
- 65 13149. Wait until I have finished my question, will you? Does it not occur to you that you might very well have gone back with a good chance of picking up some stragglers outside the swarm?  
- Yes, right outside.
- 66 13150. Does it also occur to you that you might very well have gone to another boat and put your four or five passengers off into the other boat, and then gone back and helped to pick up some poor drowning people?  
- The boats could not take any more; they were full then.
- 67 13151. How do you know that?  
- We could see the people from the distance.

- 68 13152. What boats did you see that were so full that they could take no more?  
- I do not know the numbers, but you could see them all up round the gunwales of the boats.
- 69 13153. But you say that nobody in your boat hailed either of these other boats and asked if they could take some passengers on board?  
- No, that was not the hail at all. The hail was that they asked if we had an Officer, and we said "No."
- 70 13154. It did not occur to you that you might have unloaded your passengers by getting some of the other boats to take some of your passengers, and then gone back with a practically empty boat to pick up some of the poor people in the water?  
- We did not do that.
- 71 13155. Did it occur to you?  
- No.
- 72 (The Witness withdrew.)