

## Mrs Chaffee's Account

### *Evening Tribune*

Tuesday 23 April 1912

"When my husband and I, having been instructed to put on our life belts, were coming up the stairs to "A" deck, we were met in the landing by an officer, the only one I had seen since the ship struck. I had said to Mr. Chaffee: 'We had better stay together,' but the officer said something about the women going to one side of the deck. I passed out on the deck, leaving Mr. Chaffee there. "On the deck I was told, with other women, to go up to the boat deck and a moment later we were ordered down to "A" deck again. "I did not see my husband again. The boat in which I was taken from the ship was, I think, the last of those on one side to get away. There were a good many babies in our life boat. When I took my seat a baby was thrust into my arms and I was given a sea sick woman to hold up on the other side, and so we were lowered, first one end of the boat going down at a dangerous angle, and then the other.....it seemed to writhe, breaking into the three parts in which it was divided. First the middle seemed to go down, lifting bow and stern into the air. Then it twisted the other way, throwing the middle up. Finally the bow went under, and it plunged, stern last.....From 1 o'clock until 4 in the morning, Mrs. Chaffee said, the men in their lifeboat rowed steadily. Toward 4 o'clock a stewardess continually declared she could see the radiance of a searchlight behind them, and that they were going in the wrong direction...."

[Albert Lea, April 23 1912, p. 4]

Courtesy of Peter Engberg

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