

## Mrs. Cassebeer Account

### *Binghamton Press*

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Mrs. Henry Arthur Casebeer, Jr., of New York City, who is one of the survivors of the ill-fated Titanic, was in Binghamton this morning visiting her mother, Mrs. L.V. Fosdick at the House of the Good Shepherd and to a representative of the Binghamton Press she gave her only authorized interview of the happenings on board the lost steamship on the night of the disaster.

She absolutely repudiated the report of a mythical interview with her; and said that it was a gross fabrication and a distortion of the facts as they really occurred. Her interview this morning was the first and only interview with Mrs. Casebeer since she arrived in America on the Carpathia, she absolutely refused to give out any statement to the New York newspapers. She said:

In the first place I wish to absolutely deny the report which appeared in a morning paper that I had given out for publication any story of the happenings on the Titanic. The story as it appeared this morning was absolutely false. There was no champagne in evidence on the Titanic nor was there any sign of drunkenness on the part of any of the officers. The story this morning also quotes me as saying that the discipline on board was not what could be expected is a lie. The discipline on board the Titanic was perfect. Everything was done in perfect order and the crew worked like a company of soldiers in preparing and launching the lifeboats. There was no 'spirit of recklessness predominant.' I never made a statement blaming Officer Murdock for not being on the bridge.

Her story of the happenings of the fatal night, given exclusively to the Binghamton Press is as follows:

My being aboard the Titanic was merely a matter of chance. I was visiting in Paris and being desirous of coming to America, I took the first available steamer, which, as luck would have it, happened to be the Titanic.

I have traveled considerably and this was the 10th time that I have crossed the Atlantic ocean. My cabin was situated on D deck on the starboard side of the boat, and I felt the full impact of the iceberg when we struck it.

I was reclining on a couch in my room at the time and I had summoned a stewardess to inquire if it would be safe for me to allow the electric grate to burn throughout the night. She assured

me that it would and immediately after she had left my cabin the shock of the cabin came. It sounded as if something were grinding and tearing away the very entrails of the monster liner. I knew immediately that there was something radically wrong and slipping on a kimono and slippers, I hurried on deck where I met Harry Anderson, a fellow passenger, and together we made our way to the bow of the boat where we found a litter of small particles of ice which was torn from the iceberg by force of the impact. We could see the berg towering some 75 to 100 feet out of the sea, and, as I afterwards learned only one-fifth of the iceberg shows above the water you can imagine the enormous size of that mountain of ice. Here we also met Thomas Andrews, who, I understand was the designer of the Titanic. In answer to many questions he assured everybody that we were absolutely safe and that the Titanic was absolutely unsinkable. He said that she could break in three separate and distinct parts and that each part would stay afloat indefinitely.

It was not long after this, however, that the pursers started to go among the passengers ordering them to go below and put on warm clothing and be prepared to embark in the lifeboats. I hurried below and dressed and when I came on deck again I found that the deck had started to list in a very alarming manner. I had already donned a life preserver which I found with some difficulty, and when I reached the deck I met Mr. Andrews again and he took me by the arm and led me to the lifeboat.

I could not hear just what he said to me at the time on account of the din, but I saw him motion to me to get into the boat, which was about to be swung over the rail 90 feet above the water. I asked him why he did not get in also, and he said: 'No, women and children first.'

Right here I wish to say that Bruce Ismay was there also, helping to load the women and children into the boat. He was dressed in pajamas in slippers with a coat thrown over his shoulders and as the boat I was in the sixth to leave the ship you can see that reports that he was in one of the first boats are absolutely false.

There was absolutely no panic. The discipline was excellent. I was in the boat commanded by Third Officer H. J. Pitman. There were 37 people in the boat, five of them being seamen. The boat could not hold any more at the time, as it would have been foolhardy to attempt to overload it, inasmuch as it would have buckled and broken in two from the extra weight the moment it was swung from the davits.

We saw the Titanic when it made its final plunge. The lights were burning until the very last moment and it was a spectacular as well as awesome sight. After the Titanic had sunk there were thousands of people struggling in the water crying piteously for help. Three times Officer Pitman ordered his men to turn about so that he could pick up some of them, but each time they were prevented from doing so by some of the passengers in the lifeboat who called upon the seamen frantically to go ahead and when they grasped the oars and interfered with the proper handling of the boat so that the seamen were finally forced to give up their efforts of turning back to rescue any of the unfortunates.

We were all wrapped warmly in rugs which the stewards and pursers had pinned about our waists before we got into the boat. When we were picked up by the Carpathia we were treated

beautifully by both officers and the passengers. Many of whom gave up their quarters for our accommodation.

Aboard the Titanic I sat at the same table with Dr. O'Loughlin, the ship's surgeon and Thomas Andrews of the Holland and Wolf [sic] Building Company, I believe the name of the firm is. Mr. Andrews is said to have designed the Titanic. Harry Anderson was also a member of our party.

When the boat first started to list so alarmingly I immediately started to make my way to where the men were assembled because I knew that there I would assuredly be safe. I am a staunch admirer in American and British manhood.

A fact that is not generally known is that it was very hard for the men to coax the women into the lifeboats and it became necessary for some of them men to get into the lifeboats first before the women would venture into them, so confident were they that the big steamship was absolutely unsinkable. Then again some of the women absolutely refused to leave their husband's sides and it almost became necessary for Mr. Ismay and Mr. Andrews to use force in making some of the men get into the boats with the womenfolk so that they might be saved.

Another thing that is not generally known is that the Titanic was not ready to sail at the time she did. Mr. Andrews told me himself and said that the only reason they allowed her to go when they did was that the sailing date had already been fixed and they just simply had to start. While the ship was fitted up most sumptuously once could not help but notice that she was not prepared to sail.

There were none of the usual printed notices in the cabins. The frames for them were on the walls, but the notices themselves were not there and when I tried to find a life preserver I did not know where to look for it and was compelled to inquire of some stewards who showed me where to find it.

While I knew matters were very serious I did not realize just how badly we were off until I came up on deck the last time and stumbled over the ropes with which they were preparing to lower the lifeboats. My boat was the third to leave the starboard side and the sixth to leave the ship.

Mrs. Casebeer is on her way to Washington where she will probably be called upon to testify before the Senatorial Investigating committee. She stopped off in Binghamton to visit her mother, Mrs. L.V. Fosdick who is very ill.

When seen by the Press reporter this morning, she was preparing to leave on the 11 o'clock train. A cab was waiting for her at the door to convey her to the railroad station and she told her story hurriedly while she was preparing to depart.

## **Acknowledgements**

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