

WOMAN SURVIVOR OF TITANIC TELLS OF THE LAST HOURS OF SHIP

Christian Science Monitor

Friday 19 April 1912

Miss Caroline Bonnell Says Great Vessel Stood Still in Tracks and Then Gave a Great Shiver

SAW NO CONFUSION

(Written for the United Press by Miss Caroline Bonnell) (Copyright 1912 by the United Press)

Miss Bonnell with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. George D. Wick, her cousin, Miss Mary Wick of Youngstown, O., and her aunt, Miss Elizabeth Bonnell of Southport, Eng., were on board the Titanic. All but Mr. Wick were saved.

NEW YORK--"Well, thank goodness, Nathalie, we are going to see our iceberg at last." That--that single, foolish little sentence--was the one thing of all others that I said to my cousin as the great, beautiful Titanic was shivering beneath her blow. Nathalie Wick and I were lying in our berths half asleep when the blow came. It was terrible. For a second the whole boat just stood stock still in its swift tracks and then it gave a great shiver all through. When we got out on to the deck, everything was as calm as an August afternoon. The sea was as smooth as glass. There wasn't a berg nor an ice floe in sight. And the sky was just thick with stars. I never saw so many stars in my life as there were that night. The water itself glittered blue with their glow. We had just decided to go back to bed when an officer about came up to us and to another group of people who had gotten up to find out what was the matter. "Go below and put on your life belts," he said. "You may need them later." We went down at once and told my aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. George Wick, what we had been told. Uncle George just laughed at us. "Why, that's nonsense, girls, " he said. "This boat is all right. She's going along nicely. She just got a glancing blow, I guess." That's the way every one seemed to think and we went into our stateroom, but in a minute or so an officer knocked at the door and told us to go up on the "A" deck. He said there was really no danger and that it was just a precautionary measure. When we got on the deck uncle and aunt were there and I went down again to another part of the steamer and got my aunt Elizabeth. When I got back with her, there were crowds of people standing all around. Nobody seemed very excited; every one was talking and it seemed to be the general idea that we would soon be ordered back to bed. Just then an officer came up to us and said we should go up to the next deck--the boat deck. By that time nearly every one was up. Mrs. John Jacob Astor was there sitting in a steamer chair. Her husband, Colonel Astor, was beside her and her maid was helping her to finish her dressing. There was no confusion here even yet, although we noticed that the boat was beginning to list to starboard.

Miss Bonnell then goes on to tell of the removal of the women and children into the boats. And those that were in the lifeboats which were close to the vessel say that the orchestra played till the very last and that the men went down into the sea singing "Nearer My God to Thee." In the lifeboats it was terrible. Some of the women had scarcely any clothes on at all, and they suffered greatly with the cold. One woman had white satin slippers and an evening dress on. I don't know whether she had that attire on when we struck or whether, in her excitement, she put it on by mistake. We were provided with the most miserable little oil lamps I have ever seen. I guess it didn't have any kerosene in it for it kept going out as fast as we could light it with the matches which the steward happened to bring along. We couldn't have seen at all nor signalled had it not been for the fact that one woman had a cane that had a little electric light in the end of it. As far as I know there was no food or water in the craft, but I will not complain of that for we were the luckiest, I guess, of all the survivors. The other boats all leaked and the women told us afterwards that the water was up to their knees. And that water was below freezing point 31 degrees to be even. Miss Bonnell here tells of the long wait for the Carpathia and the transfer to the rescue ship.

It wasn't long before they let down a little wooden seat about two feet long and a foot wide. Men on the deck held the ends of the cables to which this seat was attached. The lifeboat was bobbing up and down on the waves and it was pretty hard to stand up in it long enough to climb out to the seat, but you can wager we all did it. After we picked up all the lifeboats we steamed again about the scene of the disaster. In among the glassy, towering peaks of ice we threaded our way, seeing a bit of wreckage here and a baby's bonnet or a man's glove there, but no boats, and at noon we turned toward Ambrose lightship and home. The distress of the Titanic survivor's secured for them every concession from the passengers of the Carpathia. Women and men alike gave up their staterooms to us and slept on the floors of the library and smoking room. Mrs. John Jacob Astor was given one of the best rooms in the cabin and she never emerged from it during the trip. Every one on the Carpathia was kindness itself. Captain Rostron, the surgeon, the stewards, every one could not do enough for us. And to think that Nathalie and I wished to see an iceberg all the way over.

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SOUTHPORT PASSENGERS ON THE TITANIC.

Southport Visitor

Saturday 20 April 1912

THE MISSES BONNELL.

Among the passengers on board the Titanic was Miss Lily Bonnell, of 17, Welbeck-road, who was proceeding on a six months' visit to her brother, who lives in the States. She was accompanied by her niece, Miss Caroline Bonnell, and they were of a party which included Mr. and Mrs. George Wicks and their daughter, of London.

Miss L. Bonnell is a prominent member of the South and East Branch of the Women's Unionist League, and is a member of the General Council. She is also connected with the Mary Willett Day Nursery, of which she is a member of the committee. She is well known in local musical circles, and was a member of the chorus which gave a performance of Elgar's "Kingdom" a few weeks ago at Chapel-street Congregational Church.

A cablegram was received yesterday at Birkdale, stating that the four ladies of the party were saved, but that Mr. Wicks is among the missing.

Among the interviews which have been published is the following with Miss C. Bonnell. The correspondent says:--- "I next saw Miss Bonnell, of Youngstown. She said, 'The steamer was running at her usual rate of speed when the wreck occurred. Shortly before midnight on Sunday the Titanic was ploughing through icefields, which we had encountered after dinner, and, as far as I could tell, she had not slowed down. A large portion of the passengers had gone to their cabins and were asleep. I had gone to my berth, but had not undressed. As near as I can say, the accident happened at about half-past eleven.

'Her bow drove into a large iceberg, and she seemed to run up on the ice at first and then slip off. Many of the lower plates of her hull were torn asunder, and the water immediately rushed in, and the Titanic began to sink down at the bow. Many passengers were not even aware of the collision, as the vessel seemed to slip across the top of the berg so easily that no one knew what had happened.

PASSENGERS RUSH FROM CABINS.

'The alarm was given, and the passengers roused. They hurriedly seized whatever clothes were nearest at hand, and rushed on deck.. Immediately the lifeboats were made ready. There

was a rush for them, and I heard that there was some shooting among the first cabin passengers, but of this I know nothing myself. The steamer continued to sink lower and lower in the water, and it was evident she could not live long.

'The passengers rushed to the stern, and it was found that there were not enough lifeboats to save all the people. A fearful scramble ensued, but the sailors were successful in fighting off the men and rescuing the women. As the boats were lowered into the sea, the ship's band assembled at the stern on the first cabin deck and played "Nearer, my God, to Thee" as the vessel settled in the water.

"NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE."

'By the time the lifeboats were far away out of danger of the suction of the ship, we could hear the faint strains of the beautiful music on the air. It was a terrible moment. Sob after sob rent the air as we pulled away from the fated ship. The music was not inspiring. It was simply heartrending. As we got away from the ship she seemed to break up, and the centre was higher than either the stern or bow. This showed that she was already broken in twain amidships, and not telescoped.'

CRASHING THROUGH THE ICE.

'The force of the collision chiefly affected the keel and not the bow. I was told by one of the sailors that the plates must have been ripped right along the keel. We were in the boats for some hours before we were rescued by the Carpathia. We saw icefields and icebergs all about us constantly grinding and crashing together. We were in danger of being dashed to pieces, as they were constantly about us. The weather was extremely cold, and we suffered intensely, especially as many were clad in very scanty garments. The men in the second-class cabin certainly behaved with splendid heroism. There was no panic among the second-class cabin passengers, but the men in the first-class cabin flew into a rage, and were wild. I heard several shots from revolvers, and I was informed that the officers fired on the men who tried to crowd the women out of the lifeboats. We were well cared for on the Carpathia, and the mental condition of all the men and most of the women was extremely good under the circumstances. Until the ship arrived here to-night only natural evidence of insanity was shown at the lifting of the suspense.'

ANOTHER LOCAL VICTIM.

It is feared that Mr. William Theodore Brierley [sic], who for some time was the pianist at the Pier Pavilion, is among the drowned. Mr. Brierley was an exceptionally clever musician, and kept his position at the Pavilion for two years, when he went to a musical college to complete his education. He left the college and embarked on a White Star boat as pianist in the orchestra. When in Southport during the early part of the present year he informed his friends

that he was engaged to embark on the Titanic's maiden voyage. His home was in London, and he was engaged to be married to Miss Steinhilber, of St. Luke's-road, Southport. A telegram from Mr. Brierley's father early in the week told her that there was no cause for despair, but a second message stated that the worst was to be feared, as the unfortunate pianist's name did not appear in the list of the survivors. Mr. Brierley had also served as a soldier in India.

From inquiries made last night of the relatives of Mr. Hy. Walpole, we learn that no news has been recieved, and the worst fears are entertained.

Acknowledgements

Courtesy of Paul Charlesworth

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TELLS OF WOMEN PULLING AT OARS

Cleveland Plain Dealer

Friday 19 April 1912

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Youngstown Woman Relates Story of Escape from Sinking Titanic

Men Tire and Passengers Row Boats to Safety From Disaster

From reports received from the steamer Carpathia when it docked at New York it now seems certain that included in the list of those who went down to death with the Titanic were a number of Ohioans. Many of them have not been accounted for, and lists of rescued do not include them. Those headed for Cleveland who are still reported as missing are Ernest Crease, Roland Stanley, Harry Davison, W. F. Hoyt, Mrs. P. C. Corey, Catherine McGowan, and Henry Rouse. Others bound for other sections of the state are also reported lost and there is little hope that they will be found among the rescued. Mrs. W. F. Bonnell, 1972 Ford drive N. E., last night received telegrams from Miss Caroline Bonnell and Miss Elizabeth Bonnell. They said they had arrived safely and had suffered little from exposure in the lifeboats. They said Mrs. George D. Wick and Miss Natalie Wick of Youngstown had been saved, but that Col. George D. Wick had gone down with the Titanic. It was a thrilling story of a night of horror that Miss Caroline Bonnell of Youngstown, O., who, with her aunt, Miss Elizabeth Bonnell, who was rescued, told on landing from the Carpathia last night. They were rushed into a lifeboat with only coats thrown over their nightgowns. Their experience was similar to those of many of the Ohioans on the unlucky ship.

Aroused by Crash

"We were asleep in our berths when the Titanic crashed into the iceberg," Miss Caroline Bonnell said. "We immediately rushed on deck, only stopping to throw coats over our nightgowns. The night was bright and starlit. We could see the crowds of passengers falling down the stairways, while the officers sought to reassure them of their safety. Maj. Butt and Col. Astor stood by the lifeboats bravely and helped the women. They did not think the boat was going to sink. "The Titanic kept settling lower and lower, however. Then word came that the engine room was flooded. "There was some shooting. They would not allow those half crazed men to get into the boats. "I was in one of the lifeboats. After we were lowered away the men in our boat started to row. I looked back to the Titanic and could see the big ship settling. She seemed already to be only half her former height. The officer in charge of our lifeboat kept urging the men at the oars to row harder. Some of the oarsmen fell exhausted. Then we women took turns at the oars, We must have been about a mile away from the Titanic when

she went under. "There was a big wave. The sea was calm, otherwise, and I asked a sailor what it was. He said, 'the Titanic has sunk!' "It was bitterly cold. We half dressed women suffered intensely until we were picked up." William Witt of Conneaut, O., received no word that his brother Frederick was among those saved. The name of Anna Turga appears among the list of third-class passengers saved. Mattie Turja of Conneaut, whose sister, Anna, was a passenger on the Titanic, believes it is his sister. Several Finnish families who were to make that city their home were traveling steerage on the Titanic and, it is believed, were lost. Mr. and Mrs. John Fink, sr., 4106 E. 131st st, received a letter Tuesday from their daughter Mrs. Harry Davison of Chippenham, England, telling them that Mrs. Davison and her husband had booked passage on the Titanic. Davison is believed to have drowned, but his wife was saved. Henry Davison, 32, and his wife Mary, 31, visited the latter's parents four years ago and decided to make Cleveland their permanent home. They were third-class passengers. The name of Miss Mary Davidson appearing on the list of first-class survivors affords relatives hope that she may have been saved.

[page 9: Photo: Mrs. Harry Davison]

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REVISED OHIO LIST Lost with Titanic W. F. HOYT brother of G. C. Hoyt, 7919 Franklin av, N. W. MRS. P. C. COREY, niece of Rev. R. A. George, 8602 Cedar av S. E. ERNEST CREASE, brother of Mrs. Albert Stanley, 2031 E. 105th st ROLAND STANLEY, Southampton, England, Albert Stanley's brother CATHERINE McGOWAN, sister of Mrs. Margaret McCarthy, E. 36th st., near Payne av NE HENRY ROUSE, father-in-law of George Maylun, Cold rd COL. GEORGE D. WICK, Youngstown RICHARD OTTER, Middleburg township, brother of William Otter HERBERT F. CHAFFEE, Oberlin HENRY MICHAEL MITCHELL, Guernsey, England, brotehr of Mrs. Anna Jeffrey, Toledo GEORGE HOCKING, Akron ALBERT A. STEWART, Akron HENRY COTTERILL, coming to Akron to live. ---- BAILEY, coming to Akron to live. Brother of William Witt, Conneaut. HARRY DAVISON, son-in-law of John Fink, 2256 E. 69th st.

SAVED BY S. S. CARPATHIA

MRS. BOWERMAN-CHIBNALL, guest of T. W. Guthrie, 3328 Euclid av. MISS ELSIE BOWERMAN, her daughter MISS ELIZABETH BONNELL, sister of William F. Bonnell, 1972 Ford drive, NE MISS CAROLINE BONNELL, Youngstown, her niece MRS. HERBERT T. CHAFFEE, Oberlin. MISS ANNA McGOWAN, sister of Mrs. Margaret McCarthy, E. 36th st MRS. W. T. GRAHAM, sister of J. J. Graham, Lisbon MRS. ELIZABETH HOCKING, mother of George Hocking, Akron MRS. J. C. HAAGEBOOM, Newark MRS. CARL WEISAND, her cousin MISS K. ANDREW, her aunt MR. AND MRS. RICHARD L. BECKWITH, Columbus MISS HELEN NEWSOME, Mrs. Beckwith's daughter MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM RICHARDS and son George MISS NELLIE HOCKING, sister of George Hocking MRS A. H. WELLS and two children, Miss J. and Ralph, Akron MRS. A. O. BECKER and three chidlren, Springfield MISS ANNA S. TURJA, sister of Mrs. John Lundo, Ashtabula MRS. MARY DAVISON, daughter of John Fink, 2256 E. 69th st

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