

United States Senate Inquiry

Day 7

Testimony of William Ward

Source : <http://www.titanicinquiry.org/USInq/AmInq01Indx2a.php>

(The witness was duly sworn by Senator Fletcher.)

Senator FLETCHER.

Will you state your full name, please?

Mr. WARD.

William Ward.

Senator FLETCHER.

Where do you live?

Mr. WARD.

Oak Villa, 107 Millbrook Road, Southampton.

Senator FLETCHER.

What is your experience as a seaman?

Mr. WARD.

Twenty years.

Senator FLETCHER.

In what capacity were you on the [Titanic](#)?

Mr. WARD.

As saloon steward.

Senator FLETCHER.

Who was your immediate superior?

Mr. WARD.

The second steward. There were three other stewards. [Mr. Dodd](#) was the chief second steward.

Senator FLETCHER.

Who were the other second stewards?

Mr. WARD.

[Mr. Hughes](#) and [Mr. Wheat](#).

Senator FLETCHER.

Did they survive?

Mr. WARD.

One of them, sir; Mr. Wheat.

Senator FLETCHER.

Were you on duty the night of the accident?

Mr. WARD.

No, sir; I had gone below. I was just turning in when she struck.

Senator FLETCHER.

Where was the location of your [room](#)?

Mr. WARD.

About amidships, sir; on the port side.

Senator FLETCHER.

On what deck?

Mr. WARD.

On [E deck](#).

26 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you feel the shock of the collision?

27 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir; slightly.

28 Senator FLETCHER.
Enough to unbalance you on your feet?

29 Mr. WARD.
No, sir.

30 Senator FLETCHER.
What did you do? What orders did you get, and what did you do?

31 Mr. WARD.
When I felt the shock, sir, I got up. I went to the port and opened it. It was very bitterly cold. I looked out and saw nothing. It was very dark. I got back into my bunk again. Presently two or three people came along there where we were all situated and said she had struck an iceberg, and some of them went and brought pieces of ice along in their hands. I thought at first it was the propeller gone, the way she went. I lay there for about 20 minutes, and in the meantime the steerage passengers were coming from forward, coming aft, carrying lifebelts with them. Some of them got their grips and packages and had them with them, and some were wet. Still I did not think it was anything serious, and I lay there for some time, a little while longer, when the head waiter came down - [Moss](#), his name was - and said we were all to go on deck and to put on some warm clothing before we went up, as we were liable to be there some time. With that I think most everybody in the "glory hole," as we call it, got dressed and went on deck. I just put on things to keep me warm, because I did not think it was anything serious.

32 We went up the midship companionway, up to the top deck; and meeting Mr. Dodd on [D deck](#) he told us to go forward to the saloon and see if there was anyone about, and if there was to order them up on deck and to collect the lifebelts and to bring them up to the deck cloakroom.

33 I went forward and did not see anyone around there and came back, and I got seven lifebelts on my way up. When I got on deck, I adjusted preservers on people that hadn't got one. I did not take it seriously at all. I put one on myself. Everybody was supplied around there at the time.

34 Senator FLETCHER.
Was there much of a crowd of passengers around there?

35 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; everybody was moving around and in a most orderly manner. There did not seem to be any excitement. In fact, there was a lot of ladies and gentlemen there that were just treating it as a kind of a joke.

36 I went to my boat - I was stationed at [No. 7](#) - and she was already lowered to the same level as the deck.

37 Senator FLETCHER.
Which side?

38 Mr. WARD.
On the starboard side. They called for the ladies to get in. Some got in, and there were a few men got into it; quite a few of the crew up there, and they did not want them for that boat. They did not want me for that boat, although I was told off for that boat. They just had sufficient men to man the boat. Then I went aft to [No. 9](#) boat.

39 Senator FLETCHER.
Who was superintending this loading?

40 Mr. WARD.
[Mr. Murdoch](#), the chief officer. [Purser McElroy](#) was there, and [Mr. Ismay](#). I do not think any other officers that I saw were there.

41 I went to No. 9 boat and assisted to take the canvas cover off of her. Then we lowered her down to level with the boat deck, and a sailor came along with a bag and threw it in the boat. This man said he had been sent down to take charge of the boat by the [captain](#). The boatswain's mate, Haynes [[Haines](#)], was there, and he ordered this man out of the boat, and the man got out again. He stayed there for three or four minutes, and I think the purser - I am not sure on that point - said "Are you all ready?" Haynes answered "Yes" - it was either the purser or Mr. Murdoch - and with that he said: "Pass in the women and children that are here into

that boat." There were several men standing around, and they fell back, and there was quite a quantity of women and children helped into the boat; I could not say how many. One old lady made a great fuss about it and absolutely refused to get into the boat. She went back to the companionway and forced her way in and would not get into the boat.

42 Senator FLETCHER.
Was she with her husband?

43 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; I do not think I saw her husband; I did not see her husband. She would not get in the boat. There were several men in the boat then to assist in getting the women in. One woman had already fallen and hurt herself a little - a French lady. The purser told two more men to get in and assist these women down into the boat.

44 From the rail of the boat it is quite a step down to the bottom of the boat, and in the dark they could not see where they were stepping.

45 Then the purser told me to get into the boat and take an oar. I did so, and we still waited there and asked if there were any more women. There were none coming along. There were no women to be seen on deck at that time.

46 Then they took about three or four men into the boat, and the officers that were standing there thought there was quite sufficient in it to lower away with safety, and we lowered down to the water, everything running very smoothly. We got away -

47 Senator FLETCHER.
Were you in that boat?

48 Mr. WARD.
Yes.

49 Senator FLETCHER.
You were told to go in the boat?

50 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir; the purser put me in that boat.

51 Senator FLETCHER.
Who did?

52 Mr. WARD.
He asked me if I understood anything about it. I said "I understand a little about it." and he said, "Get in there."

53 Senator FLETCHER.
Who said that?

54 Mr. WARD.
Purser McElroy.

55 Senator FLETCHER.
How many people did you have to row that boat?

56 Mr. WARD.
There were four of us rowed all night. There were more men in the boat, but some of them had not been to sea before and did not know the first thing about an oar, or know the bow from the stern.

57 Senator FLETCHER.
How many men, all told, were in that boat with you?

58 Mr. WARD.
I did not count them, sir; I could not say. I should say about seven or eight.

59 Senator FLETCHER.
How many women?

60 Mr. WARD.
We had a full boat. I do not know what women were there. They were pretty thick. We had not room to pull the oars. They had to move their bodies with us when we were rowing, so she was pretty well packed. How

many there were I could not say.

61 Senator FLETCHER.
Were there any children?

62 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; there were no children in the boat.

63 Senator FLETCHER.
How many boats had been lowered before that, so far as you know?

64 Mr. WARD.
I do not know, sir.

65 Senator FLETCHER.
You know of one?

66 Mr. WARD.
One is all I know of, sir. I do not know how many altogether.

67 Senator FLETCHER.
You do not know whether the other boats on that side had been lowered?

68 Mr. WARD.
No, sir.

69 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see any lowered after you left?

70 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir. [No. 11](#) was lowered down to [deck A](#), and they were putting women and children into that boat from deck A. We were already down in the water.

71 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see any other women and children upon deck A?

72 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; I did not notice particularly.

73 Senator FLETCHER.
Was that boat full?

74 Mr. WARD.
Our boat, sir.

75 Senator FLETCHER.
Boat 11.

76 Mr. WARD.
I could not say.

77 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you stay close to No. 11 after you were both in the water?

78 Mr. WARD.
We got away from the ship's side before No. 11 was in the water, and Haynes gave orders to pull away, and we had some difficulty in unlashng the oars on account of them being lashed up. No one had a knife, for some time. We pulled off about, I should say, a couple of hundred yards, and Haynes gave orders to lay on the oars, which we did.

79 Senator FLETCHER.
Who was Haynes?

80 Mr. WARD.
He was the boatswain's mate.

81 Senator FLETCHER.
He was in charge of the boat?

82 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir. We lay there for some time; I could not exactly say how long.

83 Senator FLETCHER.
How long was it before the ship went down?

84 Mr. WARD.
I suppose about an hour afterwards.

85 Senator FLETCHER.
How long after you got out there and stopped rowing was it before the ship went down?

86 Mr. WARD.
About an hour, sir.

87 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you keep about the same distance from her until she went down?

88 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir; Haynes thought she was going down. He was rather afraid of suction, and he gave orders to pull away, which we did. We pulled as hard as we could and we increased our distance to about a quarter of a mile, or something like that.

89 Senator FLETCHER.
Was the [*Titanic*](#) moving all the time?

90 Mr. WARD.
In what way do you mean, sinking or moving ahead?

91 Senator FLETCHER.
Moving ahead.

92 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; I do not think she was. She had no way on, whatever.

93 Senator FLETCHER.
Do you know when she ceased to move ahead after the collision?

94 Mr. WARD.
I would not like to say exactly when she stopped, but I suppose about 10 minutes or so after the shock she was slowing down, then, and almost stopping then, I suppose. It being so dark, I really could not tell.

95 Senator FLETCHER.
Was she listing badly when you lowered boat No. 9?

96 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; she was not listing at all. She was down by the head, but not listing. I could not give you any degree she was down to; a very slight angle, at that time.

97 Senator FLETCHER.
Was there any suction when she went down?

98 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir; a little, I think. It seemed to us there was, in the boat. I could not swear that there was.

99 Senator FLETCHER.
Did she go down gradually after you left her, or did she stay up and then suddenly turn downward?

100 Mr. WARD.
She went very gradually for a while. We could just see the ports as she dipped. We could see the light in the ports, and the water seemed to come very slowly up to them. She did not appear to be going fast, and I was of the opinion then that she would not go. I thought we were only out there as a matter of precaution and would certainly go back to the ship. I was still of the opinion she would float.

101 Senator FLETCHER.
Then did she suddenly turn down?

102 Mr. WARD.
She gave a kind of sudden lurch forward, and I heard a couple of reports, reports more like a volley of musketry than anything else. You would not exactly call them a heavy explosion. It did not seem to me like an explosion at all.

103 Senator FLETCHER.

Could you see any passengers on her after you got away?

104 Mr. WARD.
It was too dark.

105 Senator FLETCHER.
Could you hear them calling out or anything?

106 Mr. WARD.
After she went down we heard them calling.

107 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you make toward them then or not?

108 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; our boat was too full. It would have been madness to have gone back.

109 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you assemble with any of the other boats after that?

110 Mr. WARD.
No, sir. We never got near to another boat again.

111 Senator FLETCHER.
Did the *Carpathia* come to you or did you go to the *Carpathia*?

112 Mr. WARD.
We partially rowed and she partially came some of the way. We saw her at a distance. She was headed our way. She stopped and slued around a little, and we surmised that she was then picking up a boat. It was hardly light enough to see at the time. It was just breaking day at that time, but we could see her lights. Then, of course, we started to pull toward her. I think we were about the fourth or fifth boat to be picked up.

113 Senator FLETCHER.
You were picked up about how far from where the *Titanic* went down?

114 Mr. WARD.
I should not think it would be more than about half a mile or so.

115 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see any icebergs there?

116 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir; after daybreak, but not before.

117 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see many of them?

118 Mr. WARD.
There was quite a big lot of field ice and several large icebergs in amongst the field that I saw, and there were two or three icebergs separated from the main body of the field there.

119 Senator FLETCHER.
Were they in the direction of where the *Titanic* went down?

120 Mr. WARD.
I am not competent to say, sir. I am not competent to judge whether they were in that direction or not.

121 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you arouse any of the passengers that night?

122 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; there was none of the rooms I went around to at all. I collected lifebelts on my way and brought them on the deck.

123 Senator FLETCHER.
Where were all the passengers?

124 Mr. WARD.
They were scattered all over the ship on the different decks, and there were so many decks it is hard to say where they were.

125 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see any drinking among the crew or passengers that night?

126 Mr. WARD.
No, sir; none whatever. Had there been extra dinners or banquets, or the like of that, I certainly should have known it, working in the saloon. There was nothing in the way of banquets since we left Southampton, barring ordinary dinners, that I heard of.

127 Senator FLETCHER.
If there had been a banquet on board the ship that Sunday night, you would have known about it?

128 Mr. WARD.
If there had been any banquet at all, some of us would certainly have been working for that purpose.

129 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you say you saw Mr. Ismay at boat No. 9?

130 Mr. WARD.
Yes, sir.

131 Senator FLETCHER.
Did he get in that boat?

132 Mr. WARD.
No, sir.

133 Senator FLETCHER.
What boat did he get in, do you know?

134 Mr. WARD.
I do not know, sir. He was on deck when our boat left.

135 Senator FLETCHER.
Was he giving any orders or directions, at all?

136 Mr. WARD.
None that I know of. I heard him say, "Steady, boys," or something like that - it was some expression like that - when he was standing talking to Mr. McElroy.

137 Senator FLETCHER.
Who called out for the women that were to get in the boats? Who called for the women?

138 Mr. WARD.
I think it was Chief Officer Murdoch. I would not be sure whether it was him or the purser. They were both tall men, and I would not be sure which one it was. It was dark, you know.

139 Senator FLETCHER.
Do you know if there was any banquet on board the ship that night in the [captain's room](#) ?

140 Mr. WARD.
No, sir, I do not know of anything in the captain's room at all. I did not know anything at all about it.

141 Senator FLETCHER.
What steward would serve there, or who would have knowledge of that?

142 Mr. WARD.
The captain's servant, sir. [\[James Paintin\]](#) There was no room in his room for any banquet. It would be impossible.

143 Senator FLETCHER.
Did the captain's servant survive?

144 Mr. WARD.
I do not think so, sir.

145 Mr. WARD.
No, he did not.

146 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see the [captain](#) that night?

147 Mr. WARD.
No, sir, I did not see him that night.

148 Senator FLETCHER.
Did you see him, Hardy?

149 Mr. HARDY.
Yes, sir; I did.

150 Senator FLETCHER.
Where did you see him?

151 Mr. HARDY.
On the bridge, before our boat left.

152 Senator FLETCHER.
What was he doing?

153 Mr. HARDY.
He was superintending the rockets, calling out to the quartermaster about the rockets.

154 Senator FLETCHER.
That is the last you saw of him?

155 Mr. HARDY.
Yes, sir. He walked on the deck, watching the filling of the boats. That is the last thing I saw of him.

156 Senator FLETCHER.
I believe that is all I care to ask you, Ward.

157 (Witness Excused.)