

## Experiences of a Titanic Survivor (Charles E. Judd)

### *Bucks Free Press*

Friday 3 May 1912

'Mr Wm Judd of Parkfield Villas, 166 Hughenden-road, High Wycombe, has received a letter from his brother, Mr Charles E Judd, who was one of those rescued from the Titanic, in which he gives an account of his experiences. He writes:-

"Dear Mother, Father, and all –

I suppose you know of the terrible calamity which befell us on April 14th. Oh, dear, I shall never forget that night as long as I live; it was awful. I was in the water for 5½ hours before I was picked up, and when they picked me up I was helpless. I have been in hospital (on board) with frost-bitten feet and legs; the doctor was rubbing my legs until they nearly bled to try to get life into them. I was afraid I should lose both feet. Oh, dear, what an awful thing it is to be frost-bitten, but, never mind, thank God, I am alive. I am the luckiest man in the world to be alive, I can tell you. Poor Jack Hurst is gone to the bottom. He leaves a wife and six children. It is very sad. Out of a crew of 905 there are only 205 left to tell the tale. I have a lot to tell you when I arrive home. In my room, where the firemen were, there were 56 of us, and only two of us got saved. Of course nobody knows at home who are saved and who are not, and what us fellows went through nobody knows, only God above. The cries for help were pitiful to hear. I was swimming around to find something to catch hold of, and I had my boots on, but they were not laced up, and I found something pulling at them when I was in the water. All of a sudden they came off with a jerk. It was some poor fellow, Portuguese I thought; he found something to cling to and a good job my boots came off. I expect poor Jack Hurst was blown to atoms. Fancy thirty-six boilers bursting. I tell you there was a terrible report. I was alongside the ship when she went down like a stone. Her stern was 50ft or 60ft up in the air. We were the last to leave her; the water washed us all off her into the sea. Of course, we all thought a big ship like that could not sink, but the water was master, and always will be. We lost everything except what we had on and a change at home. All my poor mates are gone to the bottom – nearly all Shirley chaps on our watch. I do not know what pay we shall get, as we have only five days due to us, and we cannot claim any more. As soon as the ship strikes our pay stops – hard lines; but, never mind, I am only too thankful to be where I am. We were in a field of ice thirty miles long. When we were picked up, there were five dead ones. We left them to float away. We were in a collapsible boat full of water up to our waists, and if we had another quarter of an hour to go we should all have perished with the cold. I will tell you more when I get home."

Mr Wm Judd adds:-

“Jack Hurst is my cousin, married. Several of my school-mates have gone down with the ship. My native place is Shirley, two miles from Southampton. I expect to see my brother about the end of this week, so, of course, I shall get some more news from him then. I might mention that he just missed the earthquake in Jamaica a year or two back, having left the port a few hours before.’

### **Acknowledgements**

Transcribed by Rebecca Jobes Gurney

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