

United States Senate Inquiry

Day 10

Testimony of Hugh Woolner

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

(The witness was sworn by Senator Smith.)

Senator SMITH.

Will you give your full name to the reporter?

Mr. WOOLNER.

[Hugh Woolner](#).

Senator SMITH.

And your address?

Mr. WOOLNER.

29 Welbeck Street, London.

Senator SMITH.

What is your business?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I am a director of various companies.

Senator SMITH.

Were you a passenger on the [Titanic](#)?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I was.

Senator SMITH.

On her voyage from Southampton to the place of the accident?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I was.

Senator SMITH.

Did you sail from Southampton or Queenstown?

Mr. WOOLNER.

From Southampton.

Senator SMITH.

I will ask you, in your own way, to state your observations and experiences on the *Titanic* between Southampton and the place of the accident, and your observation and experience following the collision, up to the time you went on board the [Carpathia](#).

Mr. WOOLNER.

What sort of observation do you wish about the period between Southampton and the place of the accident?

Senator SMITH.

I would like to know whether you observed the movement of the ship, whether you took interest in her equipment, whether you noticed her speed, where you were on the boat, what stateroom you occupied -

Mr. WOOLNER. (*interrupting*).

My stateroom was B-52. [Woolner was actually in [C-52](#)]

Senator SMITH.

On what deck was that?

Mr. WOOLNER.

That is the deck below A deck, the inner stateroom.

Senator SMITH.

Do you know anyone who was near you in the staterooms on B deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Nobody.

Senator SMITH.

Did you have any friends aboard ship?

Mr. WOOLNER.

One lady was recommended to my care by letters from friends in England. She joined the ship at Cherbourg, but I had not known her before.

Senator SMITH.

Was she a survivor?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes sir - [Mrs. Churchill Candee](#).

Senator SMITH.

Do you know whether [Mr. Ismay](#) had a stateroom on your deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I do not.

Senator SMITH.

Tell us in your own way whether you paid any special attention to the movements of the ship, to the weather, to the equipment, and any circumstance that may tend to throw light upon this calamity up to the time of the collision?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I took the ordinary passenger's interest in the number of miles we did each day. Beyond that I did not take any note of the speed of the ship.

Senator SMITH.

What were your observations?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I noticed that, so far as my memory serves me, the number of miles increased per day as we went on. If I remember right, one day it was 314, and the next day was 356, and that was the last number I remember, I think that was the last number that was put up on the ship's chart, or whatever it is called.

Senator SMITH.

Did you note the equipment of the ship?

Mr. WOOLNER.
In what respect?

Senator SMITH.
Whether she had lifeboats?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir. I went right up onto the top deck and looked around, and I took particular note of the mechanism for raising and lowering the glass windows on the [A deck](#), and I watched the sailors winding them up with these spanners that are used for that purpose. It struck me as being rather a slow job.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see any drills aboard ship by the men between Southampton and the place of the accident?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I saw none.

Senator SMITH.
Did you have occasion to see the [captain](#) occasionally?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I asked somebody to point him out to me. Naturally, one is interested to know the appearance of the captain, and I knew him by sight.

Senator SMITH.
When and where did you see him?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I saw him at breakfast and, I think, at dinner one evening in the [saloon](#), but I am not quite definite about dinner; I think so.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see him the night of the accident?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Not until I came up onto the [boat deck](#), and he was there on the port side.

Senator SMITH.
Where was he?

Mr. WOOLNER.
He was on the port side.

Senator SMITH.
Yes; but where with reference to the port side?

Mr. WOOLNER.
He was [between the two lifeboats](#) that were farthest astern on the port side, giving orders. [Wooner must have mistaken the last of the forward set of lifeboats on the port side and referred to them as the farthest astern. There were no glass enclosed windows on A deck that far aft.]

Senator SMITH.
The two that were farthest astern?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.
How long was this after the collision?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I did not look at my watch, but I should think it was half an hour.

Senator SMITH.
Did you hear him say anything or did you say anything to him?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; I did. I made one remark to him. He said: "I want all the passengers to go down on [A deck](#), because I intend they shall go into the boats from A deck." I remembered noticing as I came up that all those glass windows were raised to the very top; and I went up to the captain and saluted him and said: "Haven't you forgotten, sir, that all those glass windows are closed?" He said: "By God, you are right. Call those people back." Very few people had moved, but the few that had gone down the companionway came up again, and everything went on all right,

Senator SMITH.
Were the boats lowered to A deck and filled from A deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; from the boat deck.

Senator SMITH.
From the upper deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Then the order must have been countermanded?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Immediately.

Senator SMITH.
If you can, I would like to have you tell the committee where you were on Sunday preceding that accident?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I was in the smoking room at the time of the shock.

Senator SMITH.
Who was in there with you, if anyone, that you now know or could name?

Mr. WOOLNER.
[Mr. Steffanson](#), a Swedish gentleman, whose acquaintance I made on board, who sat at my table.

Senator SMITH.
Anyone else?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; a Mr. Kennett.

Senator SMITH.
Anyone else?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I think, but I am not quite certain, a [Mr. Smith](#). He had been with us quite a short time before.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see [Mr. Stead](#) that evening?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I did not know him.

Senator SMITH.
When did you first know of the impact?

Mr. WOOLNER.
We felt it under the smoking room. We felt a sort of stopping, a sort of, not exactly shock, but a sort of slowing down; and then we sort of felt a rip that gave a sort of a slight twist to the whole room. Everybody, so far as I could see, stood up and a number of men walked out rapidly through the swinging doors on the port side, and ran along to the rail that was behind the mast - I think there was a mast standing out there - and the rail just beyond.

Senator SMITH.
What did you do?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I stood hearing what the conjectures were. People were guessing what it might be, and one man called out, "An iceberg has passed astern," but who it was I do not know. I never have seen the man since.

Senator SMITH.
What did you do then?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I then went to look for Mrs. Candee, because she was the lady in whom I was most interested and I met her outside her stateroom.

Senator SMITH.
What took place? Just detail what you did?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I said: "Some accident has happened, but I do not think it is anything serious. Let us go for a walk." We walked the after deck for quite a considerable time. As we passed -

Senator SMITH. (*interposing*)
For how long a time?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I should think for 10 minutes or more. As we passed one of the entrances to the corridor, I saw people coming up with lifebelts; so I went inside and asked the steward: "Is this orders?"

Senator SMITH.
That is, you asked him if the lifebelts were ordered?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes. I shouted to some one going by.

Senator SMITH.
An employee with a lifebelt on?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; standing at the entrance; and he said, "Orders."

I went back to Mrs. Candee and took her to her stateroom, and we got her lifebelt down from the top of the wardrobe, and tied hers onto her, and then she chose one or two things out of her baggage, little things she could

put into her pocket, or something of that sort, and I said, "We will now go up on deck and see what has really happened."

Senator SMITH.
Did you yourself put a lifebelt on?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir. I missed that. I went back to my cabin and brought out and put one on myself, and I took the other one - there were two in the room - with me. I met some one in the passage who said, "Do you want that?" and I said "No," and gave it to him.

Senator SMITH.
Who was that; do you know?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; I do not know who it was.

Senator SMITH.
What did you do then?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I then took Mrs. Candee up onto the [boat deck](#), and there we saw preparations for lowering the boats going on. My great desire was to get her into the first boat, which I did, and we brought up a rug, which we threw in with her, and we waited to see that boat filled. It was not filled but a great many people got into it, and finally it was quietly and orderly lowered away.

Senator SMITH.
What boat was that?

Mr. WOOLNER.
That was the sternmost boat [[No. 6](#)] on the port side.

Senator SMITH.
It was a full-sized lifeboat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Or a collapsible?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; it was a lifeboat.

Senator SMITH.
Were any officers standing near it?

Mr. WOOLNER.
The captain was close by at that time.

Senator SMITH.
Did he assist in loading it?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; he sort of ordered the people in. He said "Come along, madam," and that sort of thing.

Senator SMITH.

Was there any difficulty in getting them to enter the lifeboat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; there was a certain amount of reluctance on the part of the women to go in, and then some officer said, "It is a matter of precaution," and then they came forward rather more freely.

Senator SMITH.

Do you recall how many men were put into that boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No; I can not. There were very few, I think.

Senator SMITH.

Or how many women?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Oh, I did not count them, but it struck me as not being very full, but it was rather difficult to get it filled.

Senator SMITH.

Mrs. Candee got in that boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes.

Senator SMITH.

After you had put her in the boat, what did you do?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I looked around to see what else I could do.

Senator SMITH.

Did you find anything to do?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I did what a man could. It was a very distressing scene - the men parting from their wives.

Senator SMITH.

Did you assist in loading the boats?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.

How many boats?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I think nearly all, except one on the port side, and Mr. Steffanson stayed by me all the time, also.

Senator SMITH.

This Swedish acquaintance you formed stayed by you?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.

What, if any, order was given by officers, or what did you hear regarding the filling of the lifeboats?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I do not think I remember any orders. I do not think any orders were necessary.

Senator SMITH.

You mean that the men stood back and passed the women and children forward?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes.

Senator SMITH.

There was no crowding?

Mr. WOOLNER.

None.

Senator SMITH.

No jostling?

Mr. WOOLNER.

None.

Senator SMITH.

Were these boats all filled in your presence?

Mr. WOOLNER.

On the port side?

Senator SMITH.

On the port side.

Mr. WOOLNER.

Not all. I think we missed one, because I said to Steffanson: "Let us go down on the deck below and see if we can find any people waiting about there." So we went down onto A deck and we found three women who did not seem to know their way, and we brought them up.

Senator SMITH.

Who were they? Do you know?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I do not know.

Senator SMITH.

Passengers, or part of the crew?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No; they might have been, I should think, second or third class passengers, but I did not examine them very carefully. You see, it was not very light.

Senator SMITH.

You took them up to the boat deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; and they got on all right.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see officers at these boats besides the captain?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; the first officer?

Senator SMITH.
[Mr. Murdoch](#)?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes. He was very active.

Senator SMITH.
From your own observation are you enabled to say that, so far as you know, the women and children all got aboard these lifeboats?

Mr. WOOLNER.
So far as I could see, with the exception of [Mrs. Straus](#).

Senator SMITH.
Did you see her get into the boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
She would not get in. I tried to get her to do so and she refused altogether to leave Mr. Straus. The second time we went up to [Mr. Straus](#), and I said to him: "I am sure nobody would object to an old gentleman like you getting in. There seems to be room in this boat." He said: "I will not go before the other men."

Senator SMITH.
What happened then?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Then they eventually lowered all the wooden lifeboats on the port side, and then they got out a collapsible and hitched her onto the most forward davits and they filled that up, mostly with steerage women and children, and one seaman, and a steward, and I think one other man - but I am not quite certain about that - and when that boat seemed to be quite full, and was ready to be swung over the side, and was to be lowered away, I said to Steffanson: "There is nothing more for us to do here." Oh, no; something else happened while that boat was being loaded. There was a sort of scramble on the starboard side, and I looked around and I saw two flashes of a pistol in the air.

Senator SMITH.
Two flashes of a pistol?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Pistol shots?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; but they were up in the air, at that sort of an angle (*indicating*). I heard Mr. Murdoch shouting out, "Get out of this, clear out of this," and that sort of thing, to a lot of men who were swarming into a boat on that side.

Senator SMITH.
Swarming into the boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Was that into this collapsible boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
It was a collapsible; yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.
That was the [first collapsible](#) that was lowered on the port side?

Mr. WOOLNER.
On the starboard side. That was the other side.

Senator SMITH.
You were across the ship?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
You were then on the starboard side?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes. We went across there because we heard a certain kind of shouting going on, and just as we got around the corner I saw these two flashes of the pistol, and [Steffanson](#) and I went up to help to clear that boat of the men who were climbing in, because there was a bunch of women - I think Italians and foreigners - who were standing on the outside of the crowd, unable to make their way toward the side of the boat.

Senator SMITH.
Because these men had gathered around this [collapsible boat](#)?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir. So we helped the officer to pull these men out, by their legs and anything we could get hold of.

Senator SMITH.
You pulled them out of the boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
We pulled out several, each.

Senator SMITH.
How many?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I should think five or six. But they were really flying before [Mr. Murdoch](#) from inside of the boat at the time.

Senator SMITH.
They were members of the crew?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I could not tell. No; I do not think so. I think they were probably third class passengers. It was awfully difficult to notice very carefully. I got hold of them by their feet and legs. Then they cleared out, practically all the men, out of that boat, and then we lifted in these Italian women, hoisted them up on each side and put them into the boat. They were very limp. They had not much spring in them at all. Then that boat was finally filled up and swung out, and then I said to Steffanson: "There is nothing more for us to do. Let us go down onto [A deck](#) again." And we went down again, but there was nobody there that time at all. It was perfectly empty the whole length. It was absolutely deserted, and the electric lights along the ceiling of A deck were beginning to turn red, just a glow, a red sort of glow. So I said to Steffanson: "This is getting rather a tight corner. I do not like being

inside these closed windows. Let us go out through the door at the end." And as we went out through the door the sea came in onto the deck at our feet.

Senator SMITH.
You were then on A deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.
And did you look on both sides of the deck to see whether there were people?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.
You say there were none?

Mr. WOOLNER.
None, the whole length of it.

Senator SMITH.
The whole length of A deck you saw no people?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Not a soul.

Senator SMITH.
How long was that after the collapsible lifeboat that you have just referred to was lowered?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Oh, quite a few minutes; a very few minutes.

Senator SMITH.
You remained down there with your friend until the sea came in - water came in - on A deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
On that A deck. Then we hopped up onto the gunwale preparing to jump out into the sea, because if we had waited a minute longer we should have been boxed in against the ceiling. And as we looked out we saw this collapsible, the last boat on the port side, being lowered right in front of our faces.

Senator SMITH.
How far out?

Mr. WOOLNER.
It was about 9 feet out?

Senator SMITH.
Nine feet out from the side of A deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
You saw a collapsible boat being lowered?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Being lowered; yes.

Senator SMITH.
Was it filled with people?

Mr. WOOLNER.
It was full up to the bow, and I said to Steffanson: "There is nobody in the bows. Let us make a jump for it. You go first." And he jumped out and tumbled in head over heels into the bow, and I jumped too, and hit the gunwale with my chest, which had on this life preserver, of course and I sort of bounced off the gunwale and caught the gunwale with my fingers, and slipped off backwards.

Senator SMITH.
Into the water?

Mr. WOOLNER.
As my legs dropped down I felt that they were in the sea.

Senator SMITH.
You are quite sure you jumped 9 feet to get that boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
That is my estimate. By that time, you see, we were jumping slightly downward.

Senator SMITH.
Did you jump out or down?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Both.

Senator SMITH.
Both out and down?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Slightly down and out.

Senator SMITH.
It could not have been very far down if the water was on A deck; it must have been out.

Mr. WOOLNER.
Chiefly out; but it was sufficiently down for us to be able to see just over the edge of the gunwale of the boat.

Senator SMITH.
You pulled yourself up out of the water?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; and then I hooked my right heel over the gunwale, and by this time Steffanson was standing up, and he caught hold of me and lifted me in. Then we looked over into the sea and saw a man swimming in the sea just beneath us, and pulled him in.

Senator SMITH.
Who was he?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I do not know.

Senator SMITH.
Did you pull anybody else in?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; by that time we were afloat.

Senator SMITH.
Did anybody leave your lifeboat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Leave it?

Senator SMITH.
Yes; after you got in.

Mr. WOOLNER.
No.

Senator SMITH.
Or attempt to leave it?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No. By that time we were bumping against the side of the ship.

Senator SMITH.
Against the [*Titanic's*](#) side?

Mr. WOOLNER.
She was going down pretty fast by the bow.

Senator SMITH.
You were still on the port side? Forward, or back, or amidships?

Mr. WOOLNER.
We were exactly opposite the end of the glass window on the A deck.

Senator SMITH.
How many men did you find in that collapsible boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
We found one sailor, a steward, and one other man.

Senator SMITH.
And your friend and yourself?

Mr. WOOLNER.
And the man we pulled out of the sea.

Senator SMITH.
That made six.

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
How many women were there in that boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I did not count them. It seemed quite full of women and children. I should think there were about 30.

Senator SMITH.

About 30 women and children?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.

How many children?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I did not count them, but quite a bunch.

Senator SMITH.

Did you know any of the women, or do you know any of them now?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I can not remember their names. One lady had a broken elbow bone. She was in a white woolen jacket. She sat beside me, eventually.

Senator SMITH.

What officer, if any, did you find in that collapsible boat when you got in?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No officer.

Senator SMITH.

Who took charge of that boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

There was a seaman in the stern who steered her with an oar, but when we got out among the other boats, we obeyed the orders of the officer who was in charge of the bunch of boats.

Senator SMITH.

Who was that, if you know?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I think it was [Mr. Lowe](#), the man who got his sail up.

Senator SMITH.

He got his sail up?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Afterwards; not then, but later. I think his name was Lowe.

Senator SMITH.

How far out from the side of the *Titanic* did you go before you stopped?

Mr. WOOLNER.

We got out three oars first, and shoved off from the side of the ship. Then we got her head more or less straightaway, and then we pulled as hard as we could, until, I should think, we were 150 yards away, when the *Titanic* went down.

Senator SMITH.

Did you see her go down?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Were you near enough to recognize people on deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No.

Senator SMITH.
As she went down did you see or feel any suction?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I did not detect any; she seemed to me to stop for about 30 seconds at one place before she took the final plunge, because I watched one particular porthole, and the water did not rise there for at least half a minute and then she suddenly slid under with her propellers under the water.

Senator SMITH.
She went down bow first.

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Did you hear any explosion?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; a sort of rumbling roar, it sounded to me, as she slid under.

Senator SMITH.
What, if anything, can you say to the committee regarding the discipline or absence of discipline on the part of the officers or crew after the impact?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I saw no want of discipline.

Senator SMITH.
Was there any warning or signal given, to your knowledge, after the boat struck, to passengers in their rooms?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I can not tell you, because I simply went to my room and got my lifebelt and came away -

Senator SMITH.
Who fired those two shots, do you know?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Mr. Murdoch, so far as I can tell.

Senator SMITH.
Mr. Murdoch, the chief officer?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; he was the first officer, was he not?

Senator SMITH.
You are quite certain it was not Mr. Lowe?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I am pretty certain. I think I recognized the voice of Mr. Murdoch.

Senator SMITH.

Mr. Lowe says he fired three shots as his lifeboat was being lowered.

Mr. WOOLNER.

I do not remember them.

Senator SMITH.

You got off about 150 yards from where the ship went down, and then you tied up with these other boats -

Mr. WOOLNER.

We rowed on and on for some time.

Senator SMITH.

Was your boat alone?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; for quite a considerable time we simply rowed out into the sea.

Senator SMITH.

For how long a time?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I should say a quarter of an hour. We heard other boats around about us, and when the eyes got accustomed the darkness we could see a certain amount.

Senator SMITH.

Did you have any light in your boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

There was a lantern, but there was no oil in it.

Senator SMITH.

After pulling out for 15 minutes or so, what took place?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Then some officer came along and said: "I want all these boats tied up by their painters, head and tail, so as to make a more conspicuous mark"; and we did that; and there was no call to row much after that because we were simply drifting about.

Senator SMITH.

Did you go back to the scene of the wreck after pulling out this 150 or 200 yards?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No.

Senator SMITH.

Was there any attempt made by your boat to go back, so far as you know?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Not by our boat; no.

Senator SMITH.

Did the women urge that the boat be taken back?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No.

Senator SMITH.
Did you hear any officer say that the boat should be taken back to the scene of the wreck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I did not.

Senator SMITH.
After you got tied together, what did you do?

Mr. WOOLNER.
We drifted about for a long time.

Senator SMITH.
Drifted?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; just drifted about. There was nothing to do.

Senator SMITH.
And waited until daylight?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; and then dawn began to break very slowly, and we could see more.

Senator SMITH.
During the time that you were drifting about did you see any lights in any direction other than those that were on the lifeboats?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I could not tell; but there was a green light that appeared, not all the time, but most of the time, down to the south.

Senator SMITH.
How far away?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I could not tell, but I should think about half a mile or a mile.

Senator SMITH.
That was probably the green light that was on Officer [Boxhall's](#) boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Very likely. I did not identify it.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see any lights beside that, in any direction that looked like the lights of a ship?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No.

Senator SMITH.
Or did you see any rockets?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I think I saw a rocket, rather in the direction where the [*Carpathia*](#) came up; but it was very distant.

Senator SMITH.

How long before the *Carpathia* came up?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Considerably after the sun rose.

Senator SMITH.

After daybreak did you sight the *Carpathia* right away?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No, sir; we did not sight the ship. Other things happened before then.

Senator SMITH.

Tell what happened.

Mr. WOOLNER.

An officer came down and said he wanted to empty some of the people out of his boat, because he wanted to go and rescue some people who were on what he called a raft; and they put some people out of the boat, as many as our boat would hold. Probably 5 or 6 were put in our boat, which brought us down very close to the water.

Senator SMITH.

That was Mr. Lowe's boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I think it was.

Senator SMITH.

And they took the people out of Mr. Lowe's boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Into other boats.

Senator SMITH.

And did they put some oarsmen into Mr. Lowe's boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; then he got a crew, mostly of sailors, I think.

Senator SMITH.

He recruited a crew from amongst those lifeboats?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; or he may have turned out certain men from his boat and got others.

Senator SMITH.

And you went in the direction of this swamped boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; and took the men on board.

Senator SMITH.

Did you go with him?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No, no. We were very heavily laden then.

Senator SMITH.

When it got daylight did you see any icebergs or floating ice?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; a number of icebergs.

Senator SMITH.

How near the place where the *Titanic* went down?

Mr. WOOLNER.

It is was rather difficult to identify that unless one took the wreckage that was floating away as an indication of where she went down. Taking that, I would say that the nearest was several miles away; but there were a great many of them.

Senator SMITH.

At daylight?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; and they were of different colors as the sun struck them. Some looked white and some looked blue, and some sort of mauve, and others were dark gray.

Senator SMITH.

Did any look black?

Mr. WOOLNER.

A dark sort of gray.

Senator SMITH.

How large were they?

Mr. WOOLNER.

It is very difficult to tell.

Senator SMITH.

Did you see any as large as the Capitol Building, here?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No; there was one double-toothed one that looked to be of good size.

Senator SMITH.

How high; 100 feet high?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I should think it must have been; but it was a considerable distance away.

Senator SMITH.

About 20 or 30 feet higher than the *Titanic*?

Mr. WOOLNER.

It may easily have been that.

Senator SMITH.

Did you see any field ice?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
How much of that?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I saw a faint line, what looked like a faint line along the horizon; but when we got on the [Carpathia](#), we saw it was a huge floe which stretched out, I do not know how far but we were several hours steaming along it.

Senator SMITH.
Twenty or thirty miles?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Quite that, I should say.

Senator SMITH.
And did that field ice follow closely these icebergs?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; they looked more like scouts out in front.

Senator SMITH.
Out in front?

Mr. WOOLNER.
By out in front I mean to the south.

Senator SMITH.
That is, the icebergs were out south of the field ice?

Mr. WOOLNER.
That is the way it looked to me.

Senator SMITH.
The field ice came down behind it how far?

Mr. WOOLNER.
One could not see whether it moved at all. It seemed to be stationary the whole time; but there were lumps on it, sort of lumps like haystacks or little mountains.

Senator SMITH.
I have not yet been able to discover - and I hope you will pardon me for persisting - how far to the north of these large icebergs this field ice lay.

Mr. WOOLNER.
From the boat it looked like a little white thin line along the horizon. I could not possibly judge how far.

Senator SMITH.
That is, the water line?

Mr. WOOLNER.
The water line, and then a line of brilliant ice. From the boat I could not tell how far it was.

Senator SMITH.
Did the icebergs seem to be moving?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I did not watch them very closely

Senator SMITH.

The *Carpathia* lingered in that vicinity for an hour or so?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes; she seemed to come up very slowly and then she stopped. Then we looked out and we saw that there was a boat alongside her, and then we realized that she was waiting for us to come up to her instead of her coming to us, as we hoped. Then, just at that time, when we began to row toward the *Carpathia*, [Mr. Lowe](#) came down with his boat under sail, again, and hailed us and said, "Are you a collapsible?" We answered, "Yes." He said "How are you?" I said, "We have about all we want." He said, "Would you like a tow?" We answered, "Yes we would." So he took our painter and towed us away from the *Carpathia*, and then we looked and saw that there was another little group of people standing up in the sea who had to be rescued, and there were about -

Senator SMITH.

Where were they?

Mr. WOOLNER.

They were standing on an upturned boat.

Senator SMITH.

That is, on the bottom of the upturned boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.

How many of them were there?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I do not know how many at them, but it looked like a dozen or 13.

Senator SMITH.

Were there any women among them?

Mr. WOOLNER.

One; one woman with black hair [[Rhoda Abbott](#)]. A man helped her in the boat first, when it came alongside.

Senator SMITH.

Did you go in that boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

We were only our painter's length away. Mr. Lowe took them all on board his boat.

Senator SMITH.

Would you recognize them?

Mr. WOOLNER.

The men?

Senator SMITH.

Yes.

Mr. WOOLNER.

One man I saw was a first class passenger whom I had seen in the saloon.

Senator SMITH.
Look at that young man back of you and see whether you saw him there?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I do not remember him.

Senator SMITH.
Who had charge of that upturned boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I do not know, at all.

Senator SMITH.
Any officer?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I did not recognize anybody. I did not know of them by sight. They were simply people.

Senator SMITH.
Was this boat that you jumped into hanging straight down from the davits -

Mr. WOOLNER.*(interrupting)*.
Rather out than straight.

Senator SMITH. *(continuing)*
On the [boat deck](#), or was it held out from the side of [A deck](#) by anything?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; it seemed to me to be hanging out from the side of the ship.

Senator SMITH.
The ship listed to the port side?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; and that is why I judge the boat was hanging out so far away.

Senator SMITH.
And that threw this lifeboat out away from the side of the ship?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir; that is how I judged it.

Senator SMITH.
About 9 feet?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir; I should judge it was about that; about 8 feet 6, perhaps. It was not less than 8 feet, and probably 9.

Senator SMITH.
Did the lifeboats appear to be new?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I could not tell. They were perfectly watertight.

Senator SMITH.
Did you have any food or water in your lifeboat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

We had a water breaker, I think they call it; but there was no water in it.

Senator SMITH.

Did you have any food in the boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Not that I know of.

Senator SMITH.

Did anybody ask for food?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No. A sailor offered some biscuits, which I was using for feeding a small child who had waked up and was crying. It was one of those little children for whose parents everybody was looking; the larger of those two.

Senator SMITH.

Its mother was not on this boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No.

Senator SMITH.

How old was that child?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I should think it was about 5, as nearly as I can judge.

Senator SMITH.

Do you know of what nationality it was?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I could not quite make out.

Senator SMITH.

Do you know whether it was English or American?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I should say it was not either. I should think it was -

Senator SMITH. (*interposing*)

I mean whether it belonged to an English parent or American parent?

Mr. WOOLNER.

It looked like a French child; but it kept shouting for its doll, and I could not make out what it said before that. It kept saying it over and over again.

Senator SMITH.

Were there two of these children in the boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I can not tell. This is the only one that I had anything to do with. There were several other children in the boat. We handed them into a bag, and they were pulled up the [*Carpathia's*](#) side.

Senator SMITH.

Have you seen them since?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes, I think I saw it once on the *Carpathia*. It had very curly hair, light brownish curly hair.

Senator SMITH.

Was the child identified on the *Carpathia*?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Not as far as I know.

Senator SMITH.

From what you say, [Mr. Woolner](#), I should judge that you have no complaint to make about the discipline of the crew or the conduct of the officers?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Absolutely none.

Senator SMITH.

And you do not know whether these men that crowded up around there, and crowded the women back, were of the crew or were passengers?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I could not possibly tell.

Senator SMITH.

That is the only instance where they did crowd?

Mr. WOOLNER.

That is the only instance that I saw.

Senator SMITH.

On the way out from this group of lifeboats that were tied together to the swamped boat where these people were standing up in the water -

Mr. WOOLNER. (*interrupting*).

The first one or the last one?

Senator SMITH.

The first one. At that time did you hear any revolver shots?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes.

Senator SMITH.

Who fired them?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I think it was then. I do not know who fired them. Somebody fired, I think, 4 shots in rapid succession, and we in our boat were wondering what it was, and somebody in our boat said, "I suppose it is meant for a signal."

Senator SMITH.

Could you see the man who fired the shots?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No; they were so rapid one hardly had time to turn one's head around.

Senator SMITH.

You would not recognize him if I were to point him out to you?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No; he was quite a ways off.

Senator SMITH.
Did that firing of those shots seem to add to the composure of the situation?

Mr. WOOLNER.
It did not excite anybody. Nobody took any notice of it. They did not know what it meant, and they did not take any notice of it.

Senator SMITH.
Were you looking at the [*Titanic*](#) when she went down?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
As you were looking at her when she went down, do you think she broke in two?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I did not think so.

Senator SMITH.
You did not hear any explosions?

Mr. WOOLNER.
No, sir; only a continuous rumbling noise.

Senator SMITH.
As she was going down?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
Were you where you could see the funnels?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I could not really see a thing when the lights went out. It was all brilliantly lighted at the stem end, and suddenly the lights went out, and your eyes were so unaccustomed to the darkness, you could see nothing, and you could only hear sounds.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see anyone on the ship at all when you jumped into this lifeboat?

Mr. WOOLNER.
There was nobody in sight.

Senator SMITH.
Nobody on your deck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Not a soul.

Senator SMITH.
And you saw no one on the other decks, I presume, as you were being lowered? I presume it was impossible for you to see those upper decks until you got out from the ship?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Quite so. We were right up close, and it was like the side of a house and we could see nothing at all.

Senator SMITH.

Do you think you have said everything that tends to throw any light on this inquiry regarding the ship, its crew, or officers, or equipment?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I can not think of anything else, sir.

Senator SMITH.

You say the speed of the ship greatly increased?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Judging by the log.

Senator SMITH.

And you looked at the log?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Quite so.

Senator SMITH.

Did you look at it the first day out?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I was not very much interested, because it was not a full 24 hours. I do not remember what the figure was.

Senator SMITH.

Did you look at it the second day out?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes.

Senator SMITH.

What did it record then?

Mr. WOOLNER.

As I remember, it was 514 - 514, I think it was; either 500 or 400. I think it was 514, and then 546 the next day.

Senator SMITH.

You said 314 before.

Mr. WOOLNER.

Did I? I meant 514.

Senator SMITH.

You meant 514 and 546?

Mr. WOOLNER.

Yes.

Senator SMITH.

You want your statement to stand corrected in that regard?

Mr. WOOLNER.
If you please; if you will kindly correct it.

Senator SMITH.
When did you next see the log?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I do not remember any more.

Senator SMITH.
When did you see the record next?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I do not remember any figure.

Senator SMITH.
You saw it twice?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir; it was about 40 miles more the second time, I think.

Senator SMITH.
It had increased ?

Mr. WOOLNER.
About 40 miles, as nearly as I can remember. I have not thought of the figures since I looked at them, and I do not pretend to remember them accurately.

Senator SMITH.
That was for one day's run?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes.

Senator SMITH.
A full day's run, 24 hours?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes, sir.

Senator SMITH.
What time was that? Do you know? Was it noon, Sunday?

Mr. WOOLNER.
Yes; noon, Sunday. It was put up at about 1 o'clock on Sunday in the companionway.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see the [*Californian*](#) at the scene of the wreck?

Mr. WOOLNER.
I saw her when she came up within a mile or two of the *Carpathia*.

Senator SMITH.
Did you see any ice between the *Californian* and the *Carpathia* at that time?

Mr. WOOLNER.

I don't think there was any between them; no. I think there was some behind the *Californian*.

Senator SMITH.

Did you see the [*Mount Temple*](#) that morning?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No; I did not.

Senator SMITH.

This Canadian Pacific Railway boat?

Mr. WOOLNER.

No.

Senator SMITH.

I think that is all, Mr. Woolner, and we are very much obliged to you for your courtesy.

(Witness excused.)

THESE TWO MEN JUMPED OVERBOARD JUST BEFORE TITANIC SANK; ALL LIGHTS LIT WHEN SHE FOUNDERED

Calgary Herald

Sunday 21 April 1912



Special Dispatch to the Herald

NEW YORK April 19 - Hugh Woolner, a passenger on the Titanic, is a rich Londoner [?]6 years old, the eldest son of Thomas Woolner R.A. a noted sculptor. Woolner is a man of tremendous physical stength, stand [sic] 6ft 2½ inches and muscled like a Hercules. He took his blue at Cambridge in the Hammer throwing.

At the pier Woolner was met by Edward C. Desegrand, a friend, who had been awaiting him here. Desegrand had brought along a doctor and Woolner and the physician went to the Hotel Wolcott, where the doctor forbade Woolner to see anyone except Desegrand. Later the latter retailed the story Woolner had told of his experience.

Having a Drink

"Mr. Woolner was having a drink in the cafe with a friend named Steffenson [sic]" said Desegrand "when the shock came. It was so light that Woolner and his companion who were seated at a table were not thrown from their chairs. They got up and went out on the deck to see what had happened. They learned that the Titanic had struck an iceberg but neither among officers or passengers was there the slightest fear of a catastrophe.

"For about half an hour, Woolner says he and Steffenson walked up and down on the deck without the slightest realization that there was any real danger. They saw the boats being made ready for launching, but regarded this as merely a precautionary measure.

"In about an hour they observed that the ship was beginning to settle at the bow. Then they knew that the Titanic was in peril and both men at once volunteered to aid in preserving order and in the work of getting the women and children into the boats.

"They kept at the task until the last boat had been filled and dispatched. At one time, when a boat was being loaded forward, several men, evidently foreigners, jumped in ahead of women. An officer drew a revolver and fired two shots in the air to frighten the men and make them come out of the boat. They did not come out and Woolner and Steffenson jumped into the boat and dragged them out. Woolner says that so far as he knows these [were] the only shots fired on the Titanic.

Saw Mr. and Mrs. Strauss.

"Among the passengers standing on the deck during the loading of the boats Woolner particularly noticed Mr. and Mrs. Isidor Strauss. Repeatedly Mrs. Strauss was urged to get into one of the boats, but she steadfastly refused.

"'I will not leave him,' she said, clinging to her husband, and they were still standing together when Woolner saw them.

"There was," Woolner said, "no panic and the sea was quite calm. The last boat to be sent away was one of the collapsible pattern. Woolner and Steffenson aided in getting a number of women into it. As it left the side of the ship they decided they might as well try to save themselves, having done all they could for the others, and both men jumped from the deck for the boat. Steffenson landed on it but Woolner fell short. He struck the rail of the boat with his chest and plunged into the water, but was pulled into the boat.

Lights All Burning

"According to Woolner the collision with the berg was about 10:45 and they got away in the boat about 2:15. Both he and Steffenson took oars and their boats rowed away after the others. They had gone about 200 yards when the Titanic sank. Her lights were all burning. As Woolner described it, she suddenly pitched head on, stern rising at least 80 feet into the air, and she seemed to slide rather than sink, taking her final plunge head foremost at an angle of probably 45 degrees. It was on this account that there was almost no suction.

"Woolner says that about 30 seconds elapsed, he judges, from the time she lifted until she went to the bottom. The spectacle she presented with her stern reared high in the air and her bow far under the waves, poised for her doom, is one he can never forget.

"After she went down there was not one sigh of her. The waters closed over her silently and completely. The boats strung themselves with painters and rowed about waiting for succor. It

seemed an eternity before the Carpathia appeared. The people in the boats suffered keenly from the cold and there were four dead bodies in the human cargo the Carpathia took on board."

Showing how little anticipation Woolner had of the Titanic's sinking. Desegrand called attention to the fact that Woolner had come on deck in his evening clothes. He had plenty of time to change to warmer and more comfortable clothing but did not think there would be and need and simply threw on a fur overcoat.

Courtesy of Senan Molony

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