

DUFF GORDON, Lady Lucy Christiana

48 ans- 1ère classe- billet 17485- £56 18s 7d- embarqué à Cherbourg- couturier/ créatrice de vêtements- canot 1. Rescapée avec son mari Sir Cosmo.

The first days of the crossing were uneventful. Like everyone else I was entranced by the beauty of the liner. I had never dreamed of sailing in such luxury ... my pretty little cabin, with its electric heater and pink curtains, delighted me, so that it was a pleasure to go to bed. Everything about this lovely ship reassured me.

I remember that last meal on Titanic very well. We had a big vase of beautiful daffodils on the table, which were as fresh as if they had just been picked. Everyone was very gay, and at a neighbouring table people were making bets on the probable time of this record breaking run. Various opinions were put forward, but none dreamed that Titanic would make her harbour that night ...

I had been in bed for about an hour and the lights were all out, when I was awakened by a funny, rumbling noise. It was like nothing I had ever heard before. It seemed as if some giant hand had been playing bowls, rolling the great balls along. Then the boat stopped.

Témoignage issu du site de l'Encyclopedia Titanica : <http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/titanic-survivor/lady-duff-gordon.html>

Source : Autobiographie de Duff-Gordon

British Wreck Commissioner's Inquiry

Day 11

Testimony of Lady Duff-Gordon

Source : <http://www.titanicinquiry.org/BOTInq/BOTIndx01.php#a>

Examined by the ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

12869. Lady Duff-Gordon, you will remember on the night of this disaster to the "Titanic," you were awakened, I think, by the collision?

- I was.

12870. I only want you to tell me one thing before we get to the boat, had there been offers to you to go into any of the lifeboats?

- Oh, yes, they came and tried to drag me away.

12871. You mean some of the sailors?

- The sailors. I was holding my husband's arm. They were very anxious that I should go.

12872. And you refused to go?

- Absolutely.

12873. Well, eventually you did go with your husband, as we know, in what has been called the emergency boat?

- Yes, I did.

12874. Just tell us quite shortly - I do not want to go into it in any detail - but quite shortly, how it was you went into that boat. Do you remember?

- Oh, quite well.

12875. Well, would you tell my Lord?

- After the three boats had gone down, My husband, Miss Franks and myself were left standing on the deck. There were no other people on the deck at all visible and I had quite made up my mind that I was going to be drowned, and then suddenly we saw this little boat in front of us - this little thing (*Pointing on the model.*) - and we saw some sailors, and an Officer apparently giving them orders and I said to my husband "Ought we not to be doing something?" He said, "Oh, we must wait for orders" and we stood there for quite some time while these men were fixing up things, and then my husband went forward and said, "Might we get into this boat?" and the Officer said in a very polite way indeed "Oh certainly; do; I will be very pleased." Then somebody hitched me up from the deck and pitched me into the boat and then I think Miss Franks [Miss Laura Francatelli] was pitched in. It was not a case of getting in at all. We could not have got in, it was quite high. They pitched us up in the sort of way (*Indicating.*) into the boat and after we had been in a little while the boat was started to be lowered and one American gentleman got pitched in, and one American gentleman was pitched in while the boat was being lowered down.

12876. (*The Attorney-General.*) I think it is right to say that Mr. Stengel rather confirms that statement if your Lordship will remember. It is not right according to him that the three of them came running up as Symons said. He says he did come up afterwards and was rolled into the boat. (*To the witness.*) Now you will remember when you got into the boat, and before the "Titanic" sank, did the men start rowing away from the "Titanic"?

- Oh, the moment we touched the water the men began rowing.

12877. Had you heard any orders given?

- Yes.

12878. Do you remember what they were?

- As far as I can remember, it was to row quickly away from the boat for about 200 yards.

12879. "And come back if called upon"?

- No.

12880. You did not hear that?

- Oh, no.

12881. I do not quite understand?

- I did not hear that.

12882. You did not hear it?

- No.

12883. As far as you knew all they had to do was to row out 200 yards?

- Yes.

12884. Then did the men commence doing that?

- At once.

12885. And did you hear any conversation at all in the boat before the "Titanic" sank?

- No.

12886. Did you understand the question I was putting to you?

- No, I did not hear it. In our little boat?

12887. Yes?

- No.

Mr. Duke:

She said no.

12888. (*The Attorney-General.*) But I have her proof before me, and that is why I was not sure she understood the question?

- I have no recollection

12889. Let me ask you again. I am speaking to you of before the "Titanic" sank. You understand?

- Yes.

12890. What I am asking you is: Before she sank did you hear the men saying anything in the boat?

- No.

12891. Did you hear anything said about suction?

- Well, perhaps I may have heard it, but I was terribly sick, and I could not swear to it.

12892. What?

- I was awfully sick; I do not think I could swear to it.

I am asking you about something which I understand you have said quite recently.

The Commissioner:

Read it to her.

The Witness:

Yes, will you, please?

12893. (*The Attorney-General.*) I am asking you about something which I only know from your statement to your solicitor. Did you hear a voice say, "Let us get away"?

- Yes, I think so.

12894. Did you hear it said, "It is such an enormous boat; none of us know what the suction may be if she is a goner"?

- Yes, I heard them speaking of the enormous boat. It was the word "suction" I was not sure of. I see what you mean.

12895. It is not what I mean, Lady Duff-Gordon. It is what you are said to have said to your solicitor?

- Well, I may have said so.

12896. "Such an enormous boat"; that is referring to the "Titanic"?

- Yes.

12897. "None of us know what the suction may be if she is a goner"?

- That was, I am sure, long before the "Titanic" sank.

12898. That is what I was asking you?

- Yes.

12899. I put it to you, but I do not think you appreciated the question?

- No, I did not.

12900. It was before the "Titanic" sank?

- Yes, it was before.

12901. Now after the "Titanic" sank you still continued to be seasick, I understand?

- Yes, terribly.

12902. I only want to ask you one question about that. Tell me first of all do you recollect very well what happened when you were in the boat?

- No.

12903. Your mind is hazy about it?

- Very.

12904. There may have been some talk which you would not recollect, I suppose?

- Well, I do not know.

12905. You think you might?

- I think I would.

12906. I will put to you definitely what is said with reference to yourself. Did you hear after the "Titanic" had sunk the cries of the people who were drowning?

- No; after the "Titanic" sank I never heard a cry.

12907. You never heard anything?

- No, not after the "Titanic" sank.

12908. Did not you hear cries at all?

- Yes, before she sank; terrible cries.

12909. Before she sank?

- Yes.

12910. Did you see her sink?

- I did.

12911. You mean you heard nothing at all after that?

- My impression was that there was absolute silence.

12912. Were your men rowing?

- Yes.

12913. What, all the time?

- No, they began to row as soon as the boat went down.

12914. Did you hear a proposal made that you should go back to where the "Titanic" was sunk?

- No.

12915. Did you hear any shouting in your boat. It would be better if you would attend to me?

- I am listening.

12916. Did you hear anybody shout out in the boat that you ought to go back?

- No.

12917. With the object of saving people who were in the "Titanic"?

- No.

12918. You knew there were people in the "Titanic," did you not?

- No, I did not think so; I do not think I was thinking anything about it.

12919. Did you say that it would be dangerous to go back, that you might get swamped?

- No.

Mr. Scanlan:

I have no question.

Mr. Harbinson:

I do not wish to ask anything.

Examined by Mr. CLEMENT EDWARDS.

12920. There is one question. Have you seen in the London "Daily News" what purports to be an article specially written by yourself in America?

- I have.

12921. Did you write such an article?

- No.

12922. It is an entire invention from beginning to end?

- Which article?

12923. The one in the "Daily News" which appeared on the 20th April?

- Yes, it is rather inventive. A man wrote it from what he thought he heard me saying.

12924. (*The Commissioner.*) Do you mean to say that somebody came to interview you?

- Oh, quantities of people came to interview me.

12925. But this particular man from the "Daily News"?

- No, he did not; he was a friend having supper with us the night we arrived.

12926. (*Mr. Clement Edwards.*) Will you kindly look at that article (Handing the same to the witness.)?
- What am I supposed to say?

12927. If you will look at the heading of the second column on this side you will see that it is an article supposed to be specially written by you, and what purports to be your signature appears at the foot of the column.

12928. (*The Commissioner.*) Are you looking at it now, Lady Duff-Gordon, for the first time?
- For the first time.

12929. Do you mean to say you have never seen the "Daily News" with that article in it up to today?
- Never; this is the first time. The last little bit here is absolutely a story.

12930. (*Mr. Clement Edwards.*) Absolutely what?
- A story.

12931. Then if your signature appears there it is a forgery, is it?
- Oh, absolutely.

Mr. Duke:
Do you mind letting me see that. (The same was handed to the learned Counsel.) I have never seen it till this moment.

12932. (*Mr. Clement Edwards.*) I want to use it for a moment (The document was handed to Mr. Edwards.) (*To the witness.*) You say that a friend came and had supper with you, and you suggest he is responsible for what appears here?
- I know he is.

12933. You know he is?
- Oh, yes.

12934. Some of it may be true and some of it may be false?
- Would you like me to tell you the story?

12935. I should like you to answer the question. Is this true that you watched several women and children and some men climb into the lifeboats, and did an Officer say, "Lady Gordon, are you ready?" - It is not true that the Officer spoke to me, but I did see women and children being handed into the lifeboats.

12936. Is it true that he said, "Lady Gordon, are you ready?" - It is untrue.

12937. Is this true: "I said to my husband, "Well, we might as well take a boat, although the trip will only be a little pleasure excursion until the morning"?
- Quite untrue.

12938. That is untrue. Is it untrue that you said it was the captain's special boat, that five stokers got in and two Americans - Mr. Salomon, of New York, and Mr. Stengel, of Newark?
- I do not remember saying that.

12939. It is true, is it not, that that number of persons did get in?
- It was Mr. Salomon and Mr. Stengel and Miss Franks [Francatelli], My husband and myself. We were the passengers.

12940. "Besides those two passengers there were sir Cosmo, Myself, Miss Franks [Francatelli], an English girl." is it true you said that?
- I think that might easily be.

12941. Is this true that you said this: "Numbers of men standing near by joked with us because we were going out on the ocean"?

- No, that is not true.

12942. That is invention?

- Absolutely.

12943. Is it true that you said that some of them said "The ship cannot sink," and that one of them said, "You will get your death of cold out there amid the ice." Is that true?

- No, not true.

Is it true that you said you were slung off and cruised around for two hours, and it did not seem very cold?

- Quite untrue.

12944. Is it true that you said "I suddenly clutched the sides of the lifeboat. I had seen the 'Titanic' give a curious shiver." That is invention, is it?

- Yes, quite.

12945. Did you say "Everything could be clearly made out; there were no lights on the ship, save for a few lanterns"?

- No.

12946. Is this true that you said this: "We watched her - we were 200 yards away - go down slowly, almost peacefully"?

- No.

12947. Did you say then, "An awful silence seemed to hang over everything, and then from the water all about where the 'Titanic' had been arose a Bedlam of shrieks and cries"?

- No, I never said that.

12948. That is entirely untrue?

- Absolutely.

And is it true that you said this -

12949. (*The Commissioner.*) Who was this gentleman?

- He was the editor of the "Sunday American." His name was Mr. Merrett.

12950. What is the "Sunday American"?

- It is a newspaper.

12951. Is it published in London?

- No.

12952. Where is it published?

- In New York. I could tell you exactly how it came out if I were allowed to.

12953. (*Mr. Clement Edwards.*) Is this true that you said this: "Women and men were clinging to bits of wreckage in the icy water"?

- No.

12954. "And it was at least an hour before the awful chorus of shrieks ceased, gradually dying into a moan of despair"?

- No, I never said that.

12955. Did you say this: "I remember the very last cry; it was a man's voice calling loudly, 'My God, My God,' he cried monotonously, in a dull, hopeless way." That is untrue?
- Absolutely untrue.

12956. "And we waited gloomily in the boats through the rest of the night, the stokers rowing as hard as they could to keep themselves warm"?
- Quite untrue.

Mr. Duke:
May I borrow that?

Mr. Clement Edwards:
Yes. (*Handing the paper to the learned Counsel.*)

Examined by Mr. LEWIS.

12957. Do you write for any American papers at all?
- Yes, the "Sunday American."

12958. Did you supply an article to the "Evening Herald"?
- No.

Mr. Duke:
I do not think Lady Duff-Gordon can hear; I cannot - whether "he" wrote or "she."

The Attorney-General:
She.

12959. (*Mr. Lewis.*) Do you write in the "Evening Herald"?
- No.

The Commissioner:
Mr. Duke, do you wish to ask anything?

Mr. Duke:
Yes, My Lord. I think Lady Duff-Gordon should explain about this article.

Examined by Mr. DUKE.

12960. When you were at New York you went to an hotel?
- Yes.

12961. And that evening you had supper together with your husband?
- Several people - six ladies.

12962. Did Mr. Merrett come there?
- Yes.

12963. Was he a gentleman you had known?
- A great friend of ours.

12964. Had you any idea of any publication of anything at that time?
- Yes.

12965. What did he say to you?
- After he had left us about half-an-hour he telephoned to me, and he said, "Mr. Hurst has just rung me up, and

must have your story of the 'Titanic' wreck for tomorrow morning's newspaper." He said, "May I tell your story as I have heard it?"

12966. What did you say?

- I said "Yes," and he tells me afterwards that he telephoned to their head office all he knew about it, and then a clever reporter put all that into words and it appeared next morning in the "New York American."

12967. Your friend told some clever American reporter what he had heard?

- Yes.

12968. And then you were advertised as having written and signed this false article?

- That is it.

12969. And was that published in various papers, did you find?

- Oh, all over - everywhere.

12970. But you had not seen this in the "Daily News" till when?

- Just now; here.

Mr. Duke:

I think that is all I need ask.

The Attorney-General:

I do not ask anything.

The Commissioner:

Do you want to ask anything, Sir Robert?

Sir Robert Finlay:

No, My Lord.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Lady Duff-Gordon Tells of Sinking of Great Liner

Denver Post

Friday 19 April 1912

Lady Duff-Gordon dictated the following: I was asleep. The night was perfectly clear. I was awakened by a long grinding sort of shock. It was not a tremendous crash, but more as though someone had drawn a giant finger all along the side of the boat. I awakened my husband and told him that I thought that we had struck something. There was no excitement that I could hear. My husband went on deck and told me that we had hit a big iceberg but there seemed to be no danger. We were not assured of this, however, and Sir Cosmo went upstairs again. He came back to me and said: "You had better put your clothes on, because I heard them give orders to strip the boats." We each put on a life preserver and over mine I threw some heavy furs. I took a few trinkets and we went up to the decks. There was not excitement at that time. The ship had listed slightly to port and was down a little at the head. As we stood there, one of the officers came rushing and said: "The women and children are to go in the boats." No one apparently thought there was any danger. We watched a number of women and children and some men going into the lifeboats. At last one of the officers came to me and said: "Lady Gordon, you had better go in one of the boats." I said to my husband: "Well, we might as well take the boat, although I think it will be only a little pleasure excursion until morning." The boat was the twelfth or thirteenth to be launched. It was the captain's special boat. There was still no excitement. Five stokers got in and two Americans, A. L. Salomon, whose address is No. 245 Broadway, New York City, and C. W. Stengel of Newark. Besides these there were two of the crew, Sir Cosmo, myself and a Miss Frank, an English girl. There were a number of other passengers, mostly men, standing nearby and they joked with us because we were going out on the ocean. "The ship can't sink," said one of them. "You will get your death of cold out there in the ice." We were slung off and the stokers began to row us away. For two hours we cruised around. It did not seem to be very cold. There was no excitement aboard the Titanic. We were probably a mile away. Suddenly, I clutched the sides of the lifeboat. I had seen the Titanic give a curious shiver. Almost immediately we heard several pistol shots and a great screaming arise from the decks. Then the boat's stern lifted in the air and there was a tremendous explosion. After this the Titanic dropped back again. The awful screaming continued. Two minutes after this there was another great explosion. The whole forward part of the great liner dropped down under the waves. The stern rose a hundred feet almost perpendicularly. The screaming was agonising. I never heard such a continued chorus of utter despair and agony. The great power of the Titanic slowly sank as though a great hand was pushing it gently down under the waves. As it went the screaming of the poor souls left on board seemed to grow louder. It took the Titanic perhaps two minutes to sink after the last explosion. It went down slowly without a ripple. We had heard of the danger of suction when one of these great liners sinks. There was no such thing about the sinking of the Titanic. The amazing part of it all to me as I sat there in the boat looking at this monster being destroyed was that it all could be

accomplished so gently. Then began the real agonies of the night. Up to that time no one in our boat, and I imagine no one on any of the other boats, had really thought that the Titanic was going to sink. For a moment an awful silence seemed to hang over all, and then from the water all about where the Titanic had been arose a bedlam of shrieks and cries. There were men and women clinging to the bits of wreckage in the icy water. It was at least an hour before the last shrieks died out. I remember the very last cry was that a man had been calling loudly: "My God! My God!" He cried monotonously in a dull, hopeless way. For an entire hour there had been an awful chorus of shrieks, gradually dying into a hopeless moan until this last cry that I speak of. Then all was silent.

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