

Mr Masabumi Hosono

Masabumi Hosono, 42, a civil servant from Tokyo, was the only Japanese passenger on the *Titanic*. He joined the vessel at Southampton and was rescued in lifeboat 13 (?10)

Hosono began to write a letter in English to his wife on *Titanic* headed notepaper but after his rescue he wrote in Japanese of his experience.

Hosono was woken by a knock on the door of his second class cabin. He raced outside but, as a foreigner, was ordered to the lower decks, away from the boats. *'All the while flares signalling emergency were being shot into the air ceaselessly, and hideous blue flashes and noises were simply terrifying. Somehow I could in no way dispel the feeling of utter dread and desolation,'* Hosono wrote.

Making his way back to the upper deck. *'I tried to prepare myself for the last moment with no agitation, making up my mind not to leave anything disgraceful as a Japanese. But still I found myself looking for and waiting for any possible chance for survival.'*

His chance came when an officer loading lifeboats shouted *'Room for two more.'* A man jumped in. *'I myself was deep in desolate thought that I would no more be able to see my beloved wife and children, since there was no alternative for me than to share the same destiny as the Titanic. But the example of the first man making a jump led me to take this last chance.'*

'After the ship sank there came back again frightful shrills and cries of those drowning in the water. Our lifeboat too was filled with sobbing, weeping children and women worried about the safety of their husbands and fathers. 'And I, too, was as much depressed and miserable as they were, not knowing what would become of myself in the long run.'

Hosono was rescued in lifeboat 13 but was attacked in his own country for doing so when so many others had died. His ministry sacked him, Japanese papers calumniated his cowardice, textbooks cited his survival as a model of shameful behaviour, and a professor of ethics denounced him as immoral. When a Japanese liner sank in 1954, Hosono was again dragged through the mud. Hosono died in 1939, a broken man.

His family had known for years that this diary existed but it remained hidden at the bottom of a drawer until recently. Hosono's granddaughter Yuriko made the find public.

References and Sources

The Guardian (UK), December 13 1997

Credits

John Dean

Link and cite this biography

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<http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/titanic-survivor/masabumi-hosono.html>

Titanic Passenger Summary

Name: Mr Masabumi Hosono

Titanic Survivor

Born: Saturday 15th October 1870

Age: 41 years 6 months and 0 days (Male)

Last Residence: in Tokyo Japan

Occupation: Civil Servant

2nd Class Passengers

First Embarked: Southampton on Wednesday 10th April 1912

Ticket No. 237798, £13

Destination: Tokyo Japan

Rescued (boat 10)

Disembarked Carpathia: New York City on Thursday 18th April 1912

Died: Tuesday 14th March 1939 aged 68 years

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