

The Titanic Inquiry By Senate Committee

Purpose Is to Get at All the Facts Bearing on the Disaster.

Some of the Witnesses Have Told Highly Sensational Stories.

THE purpose of the inquiry into the Titanic disaster now being conducted by a committee of the United States senate, of which Senator William Allen Smith of Michigan is chairman, is to get at all the facts bearing upon the catastrophe. The chief witnesses called were officials of the White Star line, which owned the Titanic; officers of the ship, members of the crew and surviving passengers. From them the committee sought to learn facts and circumstances that surrounded the progress of the ship before the collision and what transpired thereafter, such information to form the groundwork of subsequent sessions, when shipbuilders and naval architects will be witnesses.

J. Bruce Ismay, managing director of the White Star line, and Philip A. S. Franklin, vice president, were among the first witnesses, but their examination was not completed, and both are under subpoena to attend every session of the committee.

Some of the testimony has been sensational. Herbert G. Lowe, fifth officer of the Titanic, told how he had to use violent language to Mr. Ismay when the latter was interfering with the loading of the lifeboats. Lowe said that he did not row back to do rescue work till the dying had thinned out, fearing the drowning would swamp the boat.

J. B. Boxhall, fourth officer of the Titanic, declared that within fifteen minutes of the sinking of the ship he, with other officers, including Captain Smith, and also several passengers, noticed the masthead lights and red side light of a large steamer whose position seemed to be not more than five miles away.

Startling Declarations.

Boxhall said that he sent up rockets, used the Morse electric signal code and did everything possible to attract the attention of this steamer. He did not see her reply or acknowledge any of the signals, but he was assured by others that she did reply. Nevertheless the mysterious vessel drew away, taking an oblique course that soon sent her below the horizon of those on the sinking Titanic.

H. J. Pitman, the third officer of the Titanic, heard, he said, after he took to sea in a lifeboat, a long, low, continual moan from the drowning people. It caused him to make an effort to return to try to rescue some, as his boat could hold more, but he gave up the attempt on the protest of the passengers in his boat, who said the crowd would swamp the boat and add forty to the list of dead. He heard these heartrending cries for an hour, gradually dying away as victim after victim perished.

Frederick Fleet, a lookout on the Titanic, testified that no spyglasses were furnished the lookouts. If he had been furnished with glasses, Fleet believes, he would have been able to see the fatal iceberg in time for the vessel to have steered a safe course. He sent the customary three bells warning to the bridge and also telephoned that ice was ahead just before the vessel crashed. As soon as he had telephoned an acknowledgment was sent back from the bridge, but it was not until the Titanic had collided with the iceberg that any change was made in the vessel's direction.

Lowe's Story.

Lowe, although only twenty-nine years old, has been a seaman for fourteen years. He was on duty from 4 p. m. to 8 p. m. on the night of the accident, when he went below. He was awakened by hearing voices, got up and dressed and went on deck. The passengers were wearing lifebelts and were getting into lifeboats ready to go overboard.

Fourth Officer Boxhall told him that the ship had struck an iceberg. He crossed to the starboard side and helped lower the lifeboats. When he was working on boat No. 5 Mr. Ismay, although he did not know Ismay's identity at the time, was anxious and excited and kept ordering him to "lower away." He then used harsh language toward Ismay.

Lowe's words to Mr. Ismay were given to the committee on paper. He said that had he obeyed Ismay and lowered away quickly he might have drowned all the persons in the lifeboat. After Lowe had spoken to him Ismay walked away and went to another lifeboat.

Lowe got into lifeboat No. 14, which was roped to four others. He waited until the yells and shrieks of the persons in the water had subsided so that they would thin out, as he expressed it, and then rowed among the wreckage and picked up four persons.

Lowe says he fired several pistol shots as he was being lowered in his lifeboat. It was overcrowded, and he was afraid it would double under him. A number of Italians were at the ship's rails ready to jump, and he fired to keep them from jumping into the boat. He was positive he did not hit any one.

Boxhall's Story.

Boxhall's story was dramatic. He is thirty-two years old. He went on duty at 8 a. m. on the day of the accident

and was in the chart room working out positions most of the evening. He was just approaching the bridge on the starboard side when the collision took place and heard the sixth officer say what it was. The impact was slight. He did not take it seriously and proceeded to the bridge, where he found the sixth officer, the first officer and the captain.

Boxhall heard Captain Smith ask First Officer Murdoch what she had struck and heard Murdoch reply that she had struck an iceberg. Murdoch added that he had put the ship hard a-starboard and run the engines full astern, but it was too late; she had hit. He saw Murdoch apply the electricity that closed the water tight doors.

The stars were shining, and it was a clear night, though there was no moon. Boxhall went below to ascertain the extent of the damage and returned to the bridge and reported that he could not see any damage. He inspected all the decks and went into the lowest steerage, but not into the cargo portion of the ship. Captain Smith sent him to find the carpenter and get him to sound the ship. The carpenter told

they would drift around and later return to the ship. His lifeboat had forty persons in it and contained biscuits and water, but had no occasion to use either.

After the Titanic went down he heard cries of distress, crying, moaning and shouting from the persons in the water. He wanted to pull toward the wreck. His boat was 300 yards away, and there was room in it for a few more persons. Everybody in the boat said it was a mad idea of his, because they had far better save what few were in the boat than to go back to the scene of the wreck and be swamped by the crowds that were in the water there.

Pitman said there was a continual moan reaching his ears for an hour, then the sounds died away gradually.

Lookout Fleet's Story.

Lookout Fleet is twenty-five years old. He has served four years as a lookout and occupied the crow's nest on the Titanic from 10 to 12 on the night of the tragedy. He discovered the iceberg and gave warning before the vessel struck it.

Fleet was told to keep a sharp lookout for ice when he went on watch. He saw the iceberg right ahead—a black mass—and reported it. He first struck three bells and then telephoned to the bridge. He got the answer, "Thank you."

He remained in the crow's nest twenty minutes after the accident. The ship did not stop after he gave the signal, not until she passed the iceberg. The jar of the collision was not enough to disturb his position and did not alarm him seriously.

The most sensational part of Fleet's testimony was his declaration that a night glass would have saved the Titanic and all on board. When the ship

FORESAW SEA TRAGEDY THROUGH FEW LIFEBOATS.

New York.—Emil Taussig, president of the West Disinfecting company of New York, who lost his life on the Titanic, made persistent endeavors while alive to get the United States steamship inspection service to enforce regulations that would compel steamships to carry enough boats to give every person on board a seat in case of accident.

Letters written by Mr. Taussig to the officials of this service at Washington give evidence that he foresaw with remarkable clearness the possibility of just such a disaster as the one which cost his life. Those letters were written in 1908 and 1909 and are in part as follows: "It will certainly be calamitous if, at the next disaster which may occur, any of the passengers have lost their lives, simply because there were not lifeboats enough for them to get into. That is a responsibility that nobody would be willing to shoulder."

In lieu of all these matters brought before you, and your experience in the service, is the board willing to take the responsibility that in case of an accident to a vessel a large number of people lose their lives due to the fact that there were only a small portion of the passengers?

"Do you want to take the responsibility in view of the added facilities in the direction of entrusting steamships to carry a sufficient number of lifeboats to enable any one to say these people lost their lives owing to the fact that the board of steamship supervising inspectors did not prescribe or compel steamships to carry more boats?" "Just as sure as you are living and just as sure as there is a sun above us this thing will come to pass sooner or later, unless the rules are amended compelling steamships to carry more boats."

SOUTH CANAAN.

(Special to The Citizen.) South Canaan, April 27.

Mrs. Aigin Rockwell has returned from Dr. Thompson's hospital, at Scranton, where she has been receiving treatment.

Miss Beatrice Curtis has opened her millinery shop and is having fine success.

Mrs. Eli Shaffer and three sons are visiting relatives in Newfoundland.

Orville Bronson, who has been laid up with a broken leg for some time, now has an attack of pleurisy.

John Congdon is working at Z. A. Wonnacott's saw mill, Waymart.

The new creamery at this place is having fine success.

Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Bentham spent Saturday and Sunday at Waymart with the latter's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Wells.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Manderville, of Carbondale, will move into the house with the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fielding, in the near future.

Mrs. Blanche Bronson made a business trip to Carbondale April 17.

John Bentham is having a hot and cold water plant installed in his hotel. The plumbing work is being done by James F. Arthurs of Dickson City.

William Platt has purchased the blacksmith shop of Charles Vansickle, and is now ready for work.

Mrs. Alison Swingle, of Albany, N. Y., is visiting her sister, Mrs. John Bronson.

Lena Shaffer, of East Canaan, is the guest of Charlotte Robinson, Albert Jenkins and Lemuel Barhigh had the misfortune of losing a valuable cow.

Rumor reports a wedding soon. Adam Wagner entered Waymart High school April 15.

SOUTH STERLING.

(Special to The Citizen.) South Sterling, April 27.

As spring is here all those who intend to keep city people are busily engaged preparing for the entertaining their guests.

George H. Lancaster is remodeling his house.

James M. Gilpin is papering and painting his new house.

Samuel Frick is painting and plastering his new house.

Charles Dunning is improving. Mrs. Angeline Burke has returned from New York after a stay of five months.

Fishing has been poor on account of the cold weather. The catches have been small so far this season.

William H. Osborne injured two fingers a week ago and they are causing him a lot of trouble and causing delay in grading around his new house; also his son Lewis has been very sick but is improving.

STATE MAY HAVE FARMING COURSE.

Harrisburg.—The study of agriculture may be inaugurated in the public schools of the State, especially in rural high schools, during the coming winter as a result of an investigation into the practicability of installing it now being made by the Department of Public Instruction.

This investigation into conditions and facilities, as well as into the needs of such education, has been in progress for several months under the direction of Dr. N. C. Schaeffer, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and he plans to take up the matter within a short time.

Under the school code Dr. Schaeffer was empowered to appoint experts in industrial education, agriculture education and drawing, the appointment of the agricultural branch being given to Prof. L. H. Dennis, of State College.

The plans are to have a survey made of the State with reference to the needs of various localities and the financial resources of districts where such education is found to be advisable. Prof. Dennis has been visiting many counties, having covered practically all of the agricultural counties, and the results of his investigations are to be taken up this spring.

An optimist is a person who believes in himself, when nobody is looking.

What makes a woman proud of her husband is for him to be proud of her.



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PROMINENT FIGURES IN THE SENATE TITANIC INQUIRY.

him that the ship was making water. He went down forward and found the mail hold rapidly filling.

From the time of his return until he left the ship his attention was mostly taken up with firing off distress rockets and trying to signal a steamer that was almost ahead. He saw her masthead lights and side lights, and she seemed to be coming toward them. He thought she was close enough to read their electric Morse signal, and he signaled that she should come at once as they were sinking. He saw no reply, but others told him the steamer had replied. He figured that the ship was five miles distant.

Boxhall got away in the last lifeboat but one on the port side. He was ordered into the boat by the captain. He was half a mile away when the Titanic sank.

Pitman's Story.

Third Officer Pitman, who has spent seventeen of thirty-four years on the ocean, told a thrilling tale of the disaster. He was in his bunk at the time of the collision and was awakened by a sound that seemed to him like the ship coming to anchor. He waited a few minutes and then got up and went on deck.

He was told by Boxhall what had happened and that the water was coming in fast. He went to the boat deck and assisted in getting lifeboats uncovered and ready for swinging out. While he was standing by boat No. 5 Mr. Ismay, in dressing gown and slippers, said to him, "There is no time to waste." He thought Ismay didn't know anything about it and went about his work in the usual way. The boat was filled mostly with women and children, and Murdoch told him to take charge of it.

His boat pulled a short distance away. They were in the water an hour before he realized that the Titanic would sink. He had thought

left Southampton. Fleet said, he asked for glasses and was told that there were none. If he had had glasses he could have seen the iceberg soon enough to get out of the way.

Fleet put off in lifeboat No. 6. Lightoller told him to get into that boat and help the women in.

WRECK ADVICE TO TAFT.

President Overwhelmed With Letters on Protection of Life.

Many suggestions for laws and regulations to protect life on the ocean are being received by President Taft from every section of the country. The president is sending these letters to Secretary Nagel of the department of commerce and labor. Ultimately the information and advice they contain may be laid before congress.

One of the most general recommendations is that vessels be compelled to travel across the ocean in pairs and always within communicating distance. This can be accomplished in large measure, one communication points out, by insisting that competing steamships on common voyages shall sail at approximately the same time.

Instead of sending warships to Guantanamo each year to fire at targets and destroy imaginary enemies one writer advised that they be dispatched to midocean to demolish icebergs.

The other communications recommend an adequate number of lifeboats for all on board, emergency drills for passengers and crews, a wireless operator always on duty, powerful searchlights and a patrol of the ocean for the location and destruction of icebergs.

Suffragettes Did \$30,000 Damage. The damage done to store property during the recent window smashing campaign of London suffragettes is officially estimated at \$30,000.

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