

Crew TITANIC Survivor Stories:

Alfred White

A greaser in the engine-room

"I was on the whale deck in the bow calling the watch that was to relieve when the ice first came aboard. The collision opened the seams below the water-line but did not even scratch the paint above the line. I know that because I was one of those who helped to make an examination over the side with a lantern. I went down into the engine-room at 12:40am. We even made coffee, so there was not much thought of danger. An hour later I was still working at the light engines. I heard the chief engineer tell one of his subordinates that number six bulkhead had given way. At that time things began to look bad... I was told to go up and see how things were, and made my way up a dummy funnel to the bridge deck. By that time all the boats had left the ship, yet everyone in the engine-room was at his post. I was near the captain and heard him say, 'Well boys, it's every man for himself now.'"

Seaman Thomas Jones

Praised the courage of the Countess of Rothes in lifeboat number eight.

"I saw the way she was carrying herself and the quiet, determined manner in which she spoke, and I knew she was more of a man than most aboard, so I put her in command at the tiller. There was another woman in the boat who helped, and was every minute rowing. It was she who suggested we should sing, and we sang as we rowed, starting with 'Pull for the Shore.' We were still singing when we saw the lights of the Carpathia, and then we stopped singing and prayed."

Miss Sarah Agnes Stap

Served on the Titanic as a matron, her father was a Captain with the White Star Line Ships. She was born on one of his ships and shared his love of the sea. She owed her survival to a young cabin boy beside her who, when she was told to get into a lifeboat by the crew member in charge of that lifeboat, that there was room for her, she told the young cabin boy that as she was forty years old and had had the best years of her life, he should take her spot. The cabin boy's answer was to simply pick her up, and put her in the lifeboat.

Second Officer Charles Lightoller

Had one of the more exciting escapes from the depths of the North Atlantic. Having just got to bed when Titanic's fatal collision occurred, he soon found himself on deck loading and lowering lifeboats, his pajamas under his trousers and coat. Over the course of the evening, he allowed only one man in a life boat, restored order with an empty gun after some male passengers attempted to commandeer life boat 2, and refused his chance to leave Titanic when ordered to take command of one of the last life boats. He managed to release collapsible life boat B from the roof of the officer's quarters, but as Titanic surged forward, he went into the sea. Lightoller was pulled under by a ventilator shaft, only to be blown back to the surface when a hot boiler exploded as it hit the cold water. Ironically he surfaced right next to the overturned collapsible he had just freed. Lightoller spent a large part of the night with thirty other freezing men struggling to stay afloat on the capsized boat, but not before nearly being killed by one of Titanic's enormous smokestacks. Eventually, Lightoller was the final survivor taken aboard Carpathia.