

# A Holy Grail — The Missing Depositions

---

by Senan Molony

## *ET Research*

[Thursday 6 May 2004](#)

THERE is an undiscovered *Titanic* out there... one that may hold greater meaning than relocated rust at the bottom of the North Atlantic.

The lost *Titanic* arguably resides in 138 crew depositions of the subjective truth of what took place on that night of fears in 1912.

A vast fund of stories from the sinking has been sunk without trace for almost a century. History itself might have been blinkered all that time.

Raising to the light of day the missing depositions – if, indeed, they still exist - ought to be a prime goal of *Titanic* research. Two have recently seen the light of day, and are enough to encourage a certain hope. They also inspire the possibility that this material may be the Holy Grail... with inherent power to rewrite history.

How? Why? What? - Some answers can be sketched. But the most important question is Where?

A total of 212 witnesses from the crew of the *Titanic*, including the four surviving officers, had depositions of their evidence taken for the British Inquiry. Most crew survivors were questioned when they arrived home in the Red Star liner *Lapland*, the vessel which also carried rebooked passengers originally holding tickets for the *Titanic*'s second sailing, on April 20, from New York.



**Titanic crew returning to England aboard the *Lapland***

Courtesy of Senan Molony

The *Lapland* called at Plymouth. At this port, ordinary *Titanic* crew were detained en masse until they had deposed detailed statements. These, for the main part, are the missing depositions. No *Titanic* officer was aboard this vessel.

Of the army who were interrogated in such an extraordinary manner, less than one-quarter (43, excluding the officers; or just 22% of all crew survivors) were ever called to give evidence.

The overwhelming majority of deponents (165 men and women; 78% of the total) were never called. But they DID give accounts of the night as they saw it. Where are these accounts?

***“[A crew]man said that as he was going to his boat station he was threatened with a revolver by an officer, who was evidently under a misapprehension as to his position and duties.”***

- from *The Times* of London report of interviews with unidentified crew survivors released from detention after giving depositions at Plymouth.

*“Two or three of the men spoke of acts of shooting or threats to shoot on the part of officers. According to one statement, shots were fired in the steerage to deter some of the Italians who were getting out of hand.”*

*“Another stoker stated that as the boats were being lowered, the band was playing a waltz tune, and several of the stokers were dancing and smoking.”*

*“A stoker described how he escaped by means of a raft, consisting of a cabin door and a few other wooden objects which had been hastily collected. Owing to the fearful cold, six of those on the raft died before they could be taken off.”*

*“A fireman stated that in his room there were not enough lifebelts to go round, and several men had to lose time looking around for a belt which they ought to have had beside their bunks.”*

None of the above allegations was ever entered into evidence, save for guarded mentions of warning shots on the boat deck by the likes of Joseph Scarrott. If the interviewees who provided these quick snippets had said the same things in their depositions behind closed doors, then they all belong to the Legion of the Uncalled.

One can assume that there are other such stories that never made the official record, and we shall see striking examples from two actual depositions later.

Of course depositions are by their nature untested, and men may lie or exaggerate to clerks or journalists or both. But the differing perspectives put laboriously into writing at Plymouth are surely vital to any full and rounded understanding of the disaster and its attendant incidents.

There are, naturally, perfectly valid reasons why numbers of crewmen may not be called. The most obvious include time constraints and repetition. A deposition may be dull. Not everyone is needed for the purposes of proving particular facts – such as the filling of individual lifeboats. If nothing turns on the evidence, why call it?

It might be hard to imagine today, but there were many who regarded the *Titanic* Inquiry’s 39 days and 98 witnesses as ridiculously prolonged. It was denounced in the House of Commons as a “monstrous pie,” into which many lawyers had eagerly plunged their fingers.

Political jibes were made at how they could listen for so very long to the “interesting explanation” of how a ship might not float through having the bottom torn out of it. By this yardstick (from *Hansard* of February 1914 on a Supplementary Vote for the costs of the Court) we are fortunate indeed that so much evidence was adduced. Few realise that the Wreck Commissioner’s Court was originally intended to sit for a perfunctory day or two in Southampton.

As to repetition, some of those *Titanic* crewmen who were not called for the Mersey Inquiry had already been examined in America. A total of 26 crew who gave evidence before Senate Subcommittee were not summoned anew.

[But these men, including the officers, did give further depositions before the British Consul in New York. These statements were taken on the first and second of May, 1912.]

Excluding those crew who spoke at the public hearings in America leaves 138 individuals whose viewpoint, despite being formally taken down, was never opened to the public. Their names are known, and appended to the end of this article.

Let it be said again that entering only samples of testimony in evidence is perfectly valid, and widely practised. The conveniences for all are obvious. But the normal course of procedure is that there should be disclosure – or “discovery” – of the entirety of material to all interested parties.

In the case of the *Titanic*, being a judicial Inquiry and not a court of law, it seems doubtful that there was any such discovery. The Board of Trade literally held all the cards - and the assembled counsel, whether for the Third Class passengers or various trade unions, would have to rely on cross-examination to secure extra information from particular witnesses.

The selection of witnesses in these circumstances thus becomes crucial to what is likely to emerge. Witnesses who are called in the first place are likely to say what is already in their depositions, if not in direct evidence, then possibly in cross-examination.

And those who are not called perforce stay silent in the grand scheme of things.

The question of whether evidence was weeded out in advance now suggests itself. Before an individual weighs that question in their own mind, it is necessary to be aware of the practical operation of the British procedure.

The persons who selected the witnesses from the mass of depositions were those who led the presentation of evidence in the Wreck Commissioner's Court.

This primarily meant the Solicitor General, Sir John Simon, and the Attorney General, Sir Rufus Isaacs, who both appeared (with others) for the Board of Trade. These two august men were nothing less than the Government's highest-ranking legal advisers. Not mere officeholders of the judiciary, note well, but of the executive branch. The AG, for instance, sat at Cabinet.

A demonstration of this dual interest lies in the amendment moved in the House of Commons by the Opposition in 1913 to have both men denied their substantial legal fees – awarded by Lord Mersey – because they were already amply-salaried Law Officers of the State.

In appearing nominally for the Board of Trade before the Board's own inquiry they can thus also be said to have had the wishes and sensitivities of the Asquith administration close at heart. In short they were highly political as well as legal entities. As such they were hardly unaware of the Prime Minister's early expressed opinion that the disaster had "baffled foresight."

Whether or no, these men could, and did, pick and choose the material. The Attorney General was allowed the widest latitude by Lord Mersey in leading the evidence through calling witnesses, even though the AG occasionally offered Mersey another source of corroboration for a point already led, or appeared to invite the bench to hear some more.

Mersey could also play it the opposite way, telling Counsel for the Third Class passengers on the 21st day: "The discretion of the gentlemen at the Bar [meaning Counsel for the Board of Trade] will be exercised as to whether they [Harbinson's desired passenger witnesses] ought to be called."

The telling is in the calling. If we know almost nothing of what was said in the depositions because of uncalled deponents, we do at least know the manner in which the statements were taken. These circumstances, of themselves, should give interested persons pause for thought.

The Red Star liner, *Lapland*, with 167 survivors of the crew of the *Titanic* on board, arrived at Plymouth on Sunday morning, April 28, 1912.

Elaborate precautions were taken by the Board of Trade to prevent anyone communicating with the crew, who had no idea they were about to be detained ashore until their depositions had been taken.

Each *Titanic* crewman and woman, on arrival, was served with a notice requiring their making a statement "so that the Inquiry Commission may be in a position to select witnesses to give evidence before them." Among those who took down this material were clerks of Hill, Dickinson



& Co., solicitors not to the Board of Trade, but for the White Star Line!

A total of 85 crewmen, being the stewardesses, firemen and sailors, had their statements taken the first day and were released in the evening to continue their journey to Southampton. Some gave the comments quoted above to journalists on their way to the trains.

The remainder, nearly half, were the less militant members of shipboard, such as waiters and stewards, and spent the Sunday night in Plymouth in quarters provided for them until their statements too could also be notarised.

## **SURVIVORS OF THE CREW AT PLYMOUTH**

Detention for the Taking of Evidence

Board of Trade Precautions

(From our correspondent, Plymouth, April 28th)

A strange welcome awaited the surviving members of the crew of the *Titanic* on their arrival at Plymouth today. Instead of a popular demonstration of sympathy and benevolence they were met with a shower of legal forms, and found themselves virtually prisoners on the dock premises, prevented from communicating with anyone except Board of Trade and White Star Line officials.

Such a reception can hardly have been what they expected, and judging from incidents which came under one's notice, was as unpopular among the men as it was unanticipated. For this extraordinary state of affairs the White Star Company were anxious that it be understood that they were not responsible.

This was impressed upon me with reiterated insistence by Mr Frank Phillips, the local agent of the White Star Line. "We have made the arrangements," he said, "but it is at the request of the Board of Trade and by their orders. So far as we are concerned, we should be glad to let representatives of the Press go on board the ship, but the instructions are that no-one is to communicate with the men until their depositions have been taken."

This statement was confirmed by Mr Harold Sanderson, one of the managers of the company in Liverpool, and the representatives of the Board of Trade. The measures taken to enforce the order were of a most elaborate nature and were in the main successful.

The vessel by which the survivors travelled from New York was the *Laplant* of the Red Star Line. In addition to her ordinary passengers she had on board 167 of the *Titanic's* crew, all, in fact, except those who had been detained in the United States for the purposes of the Senate Inquiry.

Twenty of their number are women – stewardesses and restaurant attendants.

It was announced last night that tenders would leave the Great Western Dock at six o'clock this morning to meet her and bring off the passengers, mails and specie. It was nearly seven o'clock when the tenders actually put out into the Sound.

Three of the large vessels which the Great Western Company keep for this work were employed, one being intended for the ordinary passengers and the second for the mails, as is usual when the traffic is of more than a nominal character.

The third tender was evidently intended for the shipwrecked crew, with whom the process of segregation was to begin as soon as port was reached.

Among those who embarked in the tenders were Mr Harold Wolferstan, solicitor at Plymouth to the Board of Trade, Mr Furniss, of the firm of Hill, Dickinson & Co., Liverpool, solicitors to the White Star Company, and Mr Woolven, the local Receiver of Wrecks.

Others present at the dock were Mr Sanderson, Mr E. C. Grenfell, of Morgan Grenfell & Co., Liverpool, a director of the White Star Company, and Mr John Bartholomew, victualling superintendent to the company at Southampton.

Mr Phillips went out as usual to superintend the landing of the ordinary passengers. Besides these persons, and others having actual business at the docks, no-one was allowed to enter the

premises. The gates were guarded by the railway company's own police, and in addition some members of the borough police force were on duty inside, though their presence was not obtrusive.

About eight o'clock, the *Lapland* cast anchor in Cawsand Bay. Up to this time, the principal spectators of the scene had been journalists and a small crowd of dock labourers. Others gradually accumulated until along the waterfront, and on the Hoe, was a crowd of persons trying to make out with glasses what was passing on both the liner and the boats attendant upon her.

At length the tenders cast off. Two of them carrying the ordinary passengers and the mail, came towards the dock, and the third [Sir Richard Grenville], which contained the survivors of the wreck, went slowly eastward outside the breakwater and did not attempt to enter the Sound until the first of the three was in the dock.



**Titanic Crew Segregated at Plymouth**  
Courtesy of Southampton Heritage Collections

After the passengers had disembarked and left in a special train for London and the mail tender had been discharged, all the dock labourers who had been engaged were paid off and escorted outside the gates, and the dock was once more left to those whose business gave them the right of entry.

In the meantime the tender with the crew aboard cruised about the Sound, killing time. Around the dock gates was a pathetic group of people who had friends and relatives among the crew or had lost those dear to them and who waited in the hope that the survivors could tell them something of their last hours.

These, unlike the casual spectators, kept their places and spent most of their weary hours of waiting in silence.

## LANDING OF THE CREW

Noon had struck before the tender at last received the signal that all was in readiness for her, and was allowed to enter the dock. There was some cheering from the now largely augmented crowd as she came round the end of the wharf and proceeded to her station.

Her deck was crowded with men, around whom the comparatively small number of women were conspicuous from their position in the fore part of the boat. All were well dressed, thanks to the generosity of people in America who had supplied them with outfits of clothing, and all carried small bundles of other necessaries which came from the same generous source.

As they left the ship they were directed by a cordon of police to the waiting rooms near the entrance to the dock where quarters had been provided for them. The third-class waiting room was converted partly into a dining room, and the fourth into a dormitory for the ordinary

members of the crew.

The stewards and stewardesses had the second-class waiting room as a dining room. As soon as the party had assembled a meal was served. A few of them, apparently natives of the district, going to a window overlooking the road and leading to the dock gates, were instantly seen and recognised by those who had spent hours waiting for a sight of relatives or friends. A few hurried greetings were exchanged. "Hullo, Jack!" "Ah, Bill, how are you?" was the reply, and then, in a quieter tone: "Poor Tom has gone."

Anything like conversation, and especially confidential communication, was impossible in such circumstances; and the opportunity was brief for the window was quickly closed and the men hurried away to dinner.

If those who spoke had apparently little to say at the moment, it was because their hearts were too full for words.

## THE DEPOSITIONS

While the men were having dinner, preparations were being completed in another room for the taking of the statements of each one of them. It was explained that it is the business of the Receiver of Wrecks to obtain a statement from anyone who may be able to throw light on the disaster, and that the Board of Trade possesses power to detain members of a crew until their statements as to a wreck are recorded.

Every member of the crew, on entering the tender, was served with a notice under the Merchant Shipping Act that his or her statement would be required. This is not necessarily a sub-poena, but the service of the notice gives the right of detention until the Receiver of Wrecks allows the person concerned to depart.

In order to save time it was arranged to take the statements of six persons simultaneously. The intention was that the Inquiry Commission should be in possession of a proof of the evidence which each of the survivors is able to give, and that they should decide which of them shall be called as witnesses.

It was announced that as soon as each man had signed the statement he had made, he would be at liberty to leave the dock on parole, but he would be bound to return and sleep at the quarters provided for him. Then, when the business was completed, a special train would be chartered to convey the crew to Southampton, where they would be paid off.

It was also announced that immediately before the journey to Southampton a sum of £300, which had been telegraphed from America for the crew, would be distributed among them.

## UNION OFFICIALS IN THE TENDER

Later: As events turned out, the arrangements made by the Board of Trade and the White Star Company were not carried out in their entirety.

Among the many who came to Plymouth to welcome the shipwrecked men were two officials of the British Seafarers Union who had come into prominence in the last few days in connection with the strike aboard the *Olympic*. These were Mr T. Lewis, the President, and Mr A. Cannon, the Secretary. They explained that they had been deputed to come from Southampton to welcome the men, many of whom are members of the Union, and also to see that their liberty and rights of citizenship were respected.

On arriving on Saturday they applied for permits to go out to the *Laplant* on board the tender, but these were refused, the White Star officials saying to them as they had said to the journalists that no passes at all would be issued to unofficial persons.

Mr Lewis and Mr Cannon telegraphed this message to the Board of Trade, asking for an official statement as to the position of the men, and while waiting for a reply, went out into the Sound in a sailing boat with the object of getting into communication with the men as they came ashore on the tender.

In this they were successful. Speaking to the sailors and firemen from the boat, they said they had been refused permission to board the tender or even go into the dock, and they advised the men to demand the presence of the representatives of their Union. The men immediately fell in

with the suggestion, and declared that unless Mr Lewis and Mr Cannon came on board they would refuse to say anything at all.

After some little time, those in charge of the tender decided to take the two Trade Union officials aboard and did so. Mr Lewis and Mr Cannon had a consultation with Mr Woolven, the Receiver of Wrecks, and explained that they were anxious that the men should not be detained longer than necessary, and that while they invited enquiry and would facilitate it to the utmost of their power, they wanted the men to go home as speedily as possible.

As the result of this conference it was decided that the examination of the fifty or sixty seamen and firemen should be proceeded with as quickly as possible, and that they should leave for Southampton at six o'clock this evening. It is understood that the Union is paying the men's fares, a special train being provided.

The remaining members of the crew, including the stewards and stewardesses, remain until tomorrow. It was also arranged that where necessary the wives and families of the men should be informed by telegraph of the arrangement.

Another point which attracted the attention of the Union officials was the presence of a body of police in the dock, and the Chief Constable of Plymouth, Mr Sowerby, was asked if these precautions meant that the men would be under arrest.

Mr Sowerby assured them that that was not the case, and that the presence of the police must not be taken to imply it. The reply of the Board of Trade to the telegram sent earlier in the day confirmed this view. It was worded as follows:-

“Crew of *Titanic* from *Lapland* are not in any sense detained at Plymouth against their wish. They are only invited to remain on the premises provided so that statements may be taken from them to avoid delay and to settle what shall be called for evidence on the Inquiry. They are free to leave when they like, only hope that their co-operation making depositions – Solicitor, Board of Trade.”

## STORIES OF THE WRECK

After the men had had dinner, the taking of statements was rapidly proceeded with and it was soon announced that a number of them were at liberty to leave the dock premises if they wished to do so. Most of them availed themselves of this permission, and from a number of them stories of their individual experiences in the trying hours following the *Titanic*'s collision with the iceberg were gathered.

In the main these went over familiar ground. One or two points of interest may be mentioned. A man who stated that he was near Mr Bruce Ismay declared that Mr Ismay worked hard and assiduously in putting women into the boats, and it was only at the last moment that he yielded to importunity of a boat practically full of women to enter it and help to navigate it. Mr Ismay, said this man, had been scandalously ill-used at the American Inquiry...

Another fireman described how some of the women refused to be parted from their husband. There were five whom he saw actually break away from the officers who were trying to get them into the boats. They clung to their husbands' necks and absolutely refused to leave them. He added: “We heard from the boats the awful cries from the *Titanic* as she sank, and to drown them I asked one of the women to sing. She started ‘Eternal Father, Strong to Save,’ and we all took it up.

(*The Times*, Monday April 29, 1912, p.10)

The *Daily Sketch*, *Daily Mirror*, and other newspapers carried snatched accounts from the crew as they were released at Plymouth. Most went unnamed. But fireman Harry Senior was identified.

Senior claimed to have survived on Collapsible B and to have been involved in lowering the collapsibles from the roof of the 'hurricane deck.' He told the picturesque story of the Captain swimming with a baby, and said he saw the First Officer "fire at two or three men who were trying to rush the boats. I don't think he killed anyone, for as far as I could see, he fired over their heads."

Harry Senior, soi-disant end-time observer, gave his deposition. He was never called.

*"According to a waiter named Keene, the loss of so many women was partly due to their want of knowledge of the way to the Boat Deck in the darkness."*

Steward Percy Keen said it was very difficult to handle the collapsible boats, and that many more lives would have been saved had it been daylight, because people could have been passed down by ropes into the boats. He gave a deposition. Percy Keen was never called.

There is other extant material, much of it uncontroversial. Several stewardesses spoke very highly of Lady Rothes, declaring that she behaved like a heroine, both on board the ship and in the boat, and after they reached the *Carpathia* she set about cutting out clothes for the babies who were rescued.

Mundane, perhaps, but it is the stray details that are meat and drink to *Titanic* researchers.

So what became of the depositions?

They never went to the Public Record Office, unlike other documents. Yet they were officially in the possession of the Solicitor General at the Mersey Inquiry. The trouble is that the statements, referred to in legal terminology as 'proofs' had little official status. They were background notes, even if some might have contained startling allegations.

There was no official repository for such material at the time the Mersey Inquiry concluded in June 1912, according to reliable sources. These statements are not now with the Mersey papers.

The best the British Government is able to suggest now is that the bulk of the deposition were simply discarded or destroyed after the Inquiry, being superfluous in light of the findings, or that they may have been stored in a private solicitors' office.

The various arms of the British courts service deny all knowledge of retention by officialdom. It was suggested that they could be in chambers connected to the Solicitor General in his personal capacity at the time. This possibility is still being explored.

But it has also been credibly suggested that they were returned to Messrs Wolferstan, the Board of Trade solicitors at Plymouth who oversaw the taking of the depositions and were paid a sum of £205 15s and 10d for so doing.

Many other "exhibits" were returned to their original supplier – such as the Harland and Wolff model of the ship, and blueprints and documents relating to the construction of the vessel.

Messrs Wolferstan no longer exists. The company soon amalgamated with partners named Snell, who in turn formed new partnerships through the Twenties and Thirties. Harold Wolferstan was dead by 1930, by which time his firm had mutated into an unrecognisable animal, having also changed premises on a few occasion.

Suffice to say that there is no current firm of solicitors in Plymouth who claim to have any records relating to work for the Board of Trade in 1912.



**Harry Senior**  
(Senan Molony)

If this material no longer exists in a single hoard – and what a find that would be – then at least there is the consolation that individual copies of depositions did exist, thanks to it being a condition of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, that a Receiver of Wreck holding a Plymouth-style “preliminary inquiry” concerning a casualty shall furnish deponents with a copy of their statements.

In newspaper pictures of the time many released crew can be seen holding their copies. In books such as *Titanic Voices* and *The Titanic Disaster As Reported in the British National Press* crewmen are visibly brandishing or examining what are probably copies of their proofs.

## GEORGE PELHAM

Uncalled trimmer George Pelham gave a deposition to Board of Trade examiner C.T. Clee which recently surfaced and was auctioned for £4,000. Pelham told how he saw ice in the forward well deck and heard First Officer Murdoch giving the classic order "Women and children first!" He then said he made his way to lifeboat 15, all the way aft on the starboard side. He was helping to fill it with passengers, standing inside the craft...



George Pelham

"When the boat was quite full I heard the Chief Officer [Wilde] shout: 'Lower away.'

"On reaching the water we cut away the ropes to get clear. The boat was the last one on the starboard side to leave the ship, but everything was done orderly. The time was between 1.30 and 2 am.

"The firemen and trimmers, who numbered seven or eight, took charge of the boat as there was no officer or seaman.

"There were a few stewards, at least 25 women and children, and nearly 40 male passengers in the boat.

"We could see the ship sinking by the head and when about a half mile off we heard two explosions and rumbling noises.

"Directly afterwards she seemed to break in two and the stern to partly right itself for a brief period. The lights were burning 'til the last and the ship disappeared from view with the cries of the people on board.

"Five minutes later, all was silent.

"We were about three quarters of a mile away and felt no suction. As the boat was so crowded, we could not find whether there were any provisions in the boat. We found out afterwards that the boat was provisioned.

"The only light we saw was the green light from one of the lifeboats, until we saw the two lights of a vessel which proved to be the *Carpathia*.

"At about 7.30am all were safely taken aboard the *Carpathia*, and were treated with every kindness by passengers and crew."

Pelham's story is valuable because it reveals just how many male passengers crowded into lifeboat 15 on the starboard side. Here was one boat, at least, in which the men outnumbered the women and children, and it was the last one lowered on the starboard side.

Pelham - who was **not** called - thus contradicts fellow trimmer George Cavell, who **was**, and who was also in No. 15. Cavell noticeably claimed "There were men about, but we did not take them in."

Archibald Gracie, in his first study of the lifeboats, published in 1913 and based on testimony, claimed that there were only four male passengers in #15, compared with 53 women and children.

George Pelham, uncalled, is saying the opposite.



Now consider the browbeating of Samuel Rule at the official Inquiry in relation to the manning of #15, as has been pointed out privately by *Titanic* researcher Brian Meister –

6539. (The Attorney-General.) Can you give us any idea of how many of the 68 who went into this boat No. 15 were women, and how many were men?

Samuel Rule — Four or five women and three children.

6540. And all the rest men?—Yes.

6541. That is about 61 men?—Yes.

The Commissioner: This seems quite contrary to the other evidence...

The Attorney General would go on to “correct” Rule about a rush he had described of men to fill the boat, the last one on the starboard side, and telling him at Q. 6654 that he had made mistake and that “what really happened” was that they had proceeded to take in all the women and children that were there.

Rule was later recalled and meekly agreed that he had “made a mistake” (9639A) and that the “four or five women and three children” in the boat were just the ones he himself had helped to load. “The others I did not see,” he said, but despite not seeing them now judged that they were “principally” women, and that George Cavell had been right all along (9641).

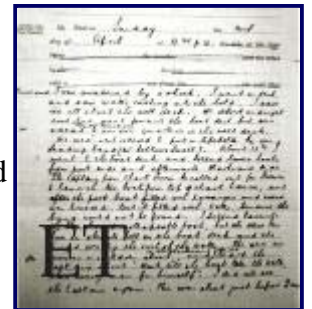
This particular episode is one of the sorriest of the entire British Inquiry. One can sense a strong desire not to have the very last starboard boat packed with muscular crewmen as it departed a sinking ship while hundreds of women and children were left to die.

But was the truth served? How was evidence accepted that every boat had a large majority of women and children when the statistics of the survivors show so many men, including nearly 200 male crew, to have been saved?

#### EUSTACE SNOW

For over 90 years the account of Collapsible A’s fate by *Titanic* steward Edward Brown, told at the British Inquiry, has lacked real corroboration. It was easy to ignore and everyone presumed ever since that boat A “floated free.”

The emergence at auction in September 2002 of a deposition from Eustace Philip Snow gives Brown some limited support in his far deadlier picture of what happened to Collapsible A.



An extract from Snow’s deposition:

*“I helped launch the starboard collapsible boat, but she stove her bow in when she fell on the boat deck and she turned over by the rush of the water...”*

Whereas Brown stated (10639) -

Had you any difficulty in sliding that boat off the house? - "We put the bow of it on the planks and let it slide down.

"We got it about halfway (to the davits) and then the ship got a list to port, and we had great difficulty. We could not get it up the incline right up to the davits.

"There were four or five women that I could see there waiting to get into this boat if we got it under the davits. [The ship] put the bridge under then. I found the water come right up to my legs here, and I jumped into the collapsible boat then.

"There was a lot scrambled into it then; when the sea came on to the deck they all scrambled into the boat. The boat was practically full when the sea came into it and washed them all out."

The boat was practically full, and the occupants were washed out. The majority were presumably swiftly drowned, for only a handful would later board her. She wasn’t empty before she elegantly “floated free.”

Snow is another end-time observer. He heard the Captain shout: “Every man for himself.” It would have been illuminating if Snow had been called, yet the British Inquiry seems to have kept as far away as possible from the climactic, eschatological events on the R.M.S. *Titanic*. Why?

More depositions are certainly out there. The motherlode itself might still exist, and if ever published would

make an interesting body of work with which to compare the official transcripts. One thing is certain – if not actively sought, the Holy Grail will never be found.

### The Silent Majority – The British Inquiry’s Uncalled Deponents

- 1) Allen, Ernest - Trimmer
- 2) Anderson, James - Asst Bosun
- 3) Avery, James - Trimmer
- 4) Baggott, Allen - Steward
- 5) Bailey, Henry - Master-at-Arms
- 6) Ball, Percy - Plate washer
- 7) Bennett, Mabel - Stewardess
- 8) Binstead, Walter - Trimmer
- 9) Blake, Patrick - Trimmer
- 10) Bliss, Emma - Stewardess
- 11) Bowker, Ruth - Cashier
- 12) Burgess, Charles - Baker
- 13) Burrage, Alfred - Steward
- 14) Caton, Annie - Stewardess
- 15) Chapman, Joseph - Steward
- 16) Clark, William – Fireman (boat 15)
- 17) Colgan, Joseph - Scullion
- 18) Combes, George - Fireman
- 19) Couper, Robert. - Fireman
- 20) Crafter, Frederick - Steward
- 21) Cullen, Charles - Steward
- 22) Daniels, Sid - Steward
- 23) Dilley, John - Fireman
- 24) Doel, Frederick - Fireman
- 25) Dore, A. - Trimmer
- 26) Dymond, John - Fireman (in charge of boat 15)
- 27) Draper, J. - Fireman
- 28) Ellis, John - Cook
- 29) Faulkner, William - Steward
- 30) Fitzpatrick, Charles - Steward
- 31) Flarty Edward - Fireman
- 32) Foley, Jack - Storekeeper
- 33) Foley, William - Steward
- 34) Forward, James - AB
- 35) Fredericks, W. - Trimmer
- 36) Fryer, Albert - Trimmer
- 37) Gibbons, Jacob - Steward
- 38) Godley, George - Fireman
- 39) Gold, Kate - Stewardess
- 40) Graham, Thomas - Fireman
- 41) Gregson, Mary - Stewardess
- 42) Guy, Edward - Assistant Boots
- 43) Halford, Richard - Steward
- 44) Harder, William - Window Cleaner
- 45) Hardwick, Reginald - Kitchen Porter
- 46) Harris, A - Bosun’s mate
- 47) Harrison, Argdon - Steward
- 48) Hartnell, Fred - Steward
- 49) Hebb, A. - Trimmer
- 50) Humphreys, Sidney - Quartermaster

- 51) Hunt, Albert - Trimmer
- 52) Hurst, Wally - Fireman
- 53) Haggan, John - Fireman
- 54) Hyland, Leo - Steward
- 55) Jessop, Violet - Stewardess
- 56) Judd, Charles - Fireman
- 57) Kaspar, Franz - Fireman
- 58) Keene, Percy - Steward
- 59) Kemish, George - Fireman
- 60) Knight, George - Fireman
- 61) Knowles, Thomas - Fireman
- 62) Lavington, Bessie - Stewardess
- 63) Lewis, Arthur - Steward
- 64) Lindsay, William - Fireman
- 65) Littlejohn, Alexander - Steward
- 66) Major, William - Fireman
- 67) Martin, Annie - Stewardess
- 68) Martin, F. - Scullion
- 69) Martin, Mabel - Asst Cashier
- 70) Marsden, Elizabeth - Stewardess
- 71) Mason, Frank - Fireman
- 72) Maynard, Isaac John - Entrée cook
- 73) Mayzes, Thomas - Fireman
- 74) McCarthy, William - AB
- 75) McGann, James - Trimmer
- 76) McGough, George 'Paddy' - AB
- 77) McIntyre, William - Trimmer
- 78) McLaren, Mrs H - Stewardess
- 79) McMicken, Arthur - Steward
- 80) Mills, Christopher - Assistant Baker
- 81) Moore, John - Fireman
- 82) Murdock, William - Fireman
- 83) Neal, Henry - Assistant Baker
- 84) Nichols, Walter - Steward
- 85) Noss, Henry - Fireman (boat 15)
- 86) Nutbeam, William - Fireman
- 87) Othen, Charles - Fireman
- 88) Oliver, H - Fireman
- 89) O'Connor, John - Fireman
- 90) Pascoe, Charles - AB
- 91) Pearce, J. - Fireman
- 92) \*Pelham, George - Trimmer (deposition sold at auction)
- 93) Perry, Edgar - Trimmer
- 94) Peters, William - AB
- 95) Pfropper, Richard - Steward
- 96) Phillimore, Harold - Steward
- 97) Port, Frank - Steward
- 98) Prangnell, George - Greaser
- 99) Prentice, Frank - Storekeeper
- 100) Priest, John - Fireman
- 101) Prior, Harold - Steward
- 102) Pritchard, A. - Stewardess
- 103) Podesta, John - Fireman
- 104) Pugh, Alfred - Steward

- 105) Rice, Charles - Fireman
- 106) Roberts, Mary - Stewardess
- 107) Ross, Horace - Scullion
- 108) Ryerson, William - Steward
- 109) Savage, Charles - Steward
- 110) Simmons, Andrew - Scullion
- 111) Sloan, Mary - Stewardess
- 112) Slocombe, Maud - Stewardess
- 113) Smith, T.E. - Stewardess
- 114) Spackman, H. - Fireman
- 115) Stap, Sarah - Stewardess
- 116) Street, Albert - Fireman
- 117) Self, Edward - Fireman
- 118) Senior, Harry - Fireman
- 119) \*Snow, Eustace - Trimmer (deposition sold at auction for £3,000)
- 120) Stewart, Jack - Steward (boat 15)
- 121) Terrell, Frank - Steward
- 122) Thessinger, Alfred - Steward
- 123) Threlfall, Thomas - Fireman
- 124) Thresher, George - Fireman
- 125) Triggs, Robert - Fireman
- 126) Thompson, John - Trimmer
- 127) Thomas, Albert - Steward
- 128) Thomas, Benjamin - Steward
- 129) Toms, F. - Steward
- 130) Vigott, Phillip - AB
- 131) Weller, William - AB
- 132) White, Arthur - Greaser
- 133) White, William - Trimmer
- 134) Williams, Walter - Steward
- 135) Windebank, Alfred - Assistant Cook
- 136) Witter, James - Steward
- 137) Wright, William - Steward
- 138) Yearsley, Henry - Steward

Did not give evidence to British Inquiry, but called in America -

Charles Andrews, W Brice, Arthur Bright, William Burke, Frederick Clinch, John Collins, George Crowe, Andrew Cunningham, Henry Etches, Frank Evans, John Hardy, Thomas Jones, George Moore, Alfred Olliver, Frank Osman, Walter Perkis, Frederick Dent Ray, W.H. Taylor, William Ward, Edward Wheelton, James Widgery, Walter Wynn. (22 + 4 officers)

---

© Senan Molony 2004

Thanks to [Southampton City Heritage Collections](#)

Eustace Snow affidavit now in the ownership of Craig Sopin, USA. © All Rights Reserved.

---

Courtesy of [Senan Molony](#)

© Encyclopedia Titanica ([www.encyclopedia-titanica.org](http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org)) 1996-2010 and third parties (ref: #2848, accessed 5th February 2010 10:00:08 PM)

URL : <http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/holy-grail-depositions.html>