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Titanica

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Fr Browne: Defamation, anonymity, and some missing photographs?

by Senan Molony

THIS is a tangled tale; but one that explains how an impoverished student priest came to be travelling first class on the most luxurious ship every constructed – and how some of the pictures he took on board may still be missing.

Fr Francis Browne, a man of no property, captured priceless images of the RMS *Titanic*'s first and only voyage. While justly famous, there are tantalising indications that the known Fr Browne trove is incomplete – and that other glimpses may remain to be discovered.

Much of the background to this mystery lies, ironically, in wireless telegraphy... and the intense interest in the subject displayed by Fr Browne prior to the maiden voyage.



Fr Francis Browne, Bishop Browne, and Fr William Browne.

An uncle and his two nephews.

Courtesy of Senan Molony

IT is already widely known that Fr Browne's ticket for the *Titanic* was bought for him by his uncle, who happened to be the Lord Bishop of Cloyne, a diocese whose seat is St Colman's Cathedral, towering high on a terrace above Queenstown, Co Cork, the White Star liner's last port of call.

Why a Catholic Bishop bought an expensive ticket for his nephew on an apparent whim can now be explained. The Bishop won the money, and more, in a libel award delivered exactly a month before the ship sailed –

**BISHOP OF CLOYNE VINDICATED
Foul Calumny Refuted
A Scottish Paper's Charges
Most Rev Dr Browne Examined
Protestant Witnesses' Testimony
£200 DAMAGES FOR BISHOP
£50 for Each of Six Priests**

This is a report of the case from the *Weekly Freeman*, datelined Edinburgh, on Friday March 15, 1912:

At ten o'clock today in the Court of Session, the hearing of the action brought by His Lordship the Bishop of Cloyne against Messrs D. C. Thomson and Co., Limited, publishers and proprietors of the *Dundee Courier* was opened before Lord Hunter and a City of Edinburgh special jury.

Joined with his Lordship as co-plaintiffs were Rev. Fr Madigan, PP, Castletownroche; Rev Fr Corbett, Adm, Newmarket; Rev Fr O'Connor CC, Queenstown, Rev Fr O'Donoghue, ditto, Rev Fr Kent CC, and Rev Fr Browne, CC, do.

The matter complained of was an article appearing in the *Dundee Courier* of August 15th (1911) headed:

***SINISTER SIDELIGHTS
ON HOME RULE.***

"Irish Incident Showing Feeling Towards Britain. By One Who Has Lived in Ireland."

"Religion makes all the difference in everything in Ireland. This incident will show you what it can do, and has done. Two years ago, in Queenstown, Co Cork, instructions were issued by the Roman Catholic religious authorities that all Protestant shop assistants were to be discharged. One shopkeeper, a Roman Catholic, refused to discharge an assistant he had had for a number of years. The consequence was that his shop was proclaimed, and in three months he had to close and clear out, his stock being sold for next to nothing. He and his family left for Britain, where, as he said, he would employ an atheist if he liked."

This, the plaintiffs alleged, was a false, calumnious, and malicious charge of having conceived, out of a spirit of religious intolerance, and put into operation, a criminal and illegal conspiracy to secure, by underhand use of ecclesiastical influence upon the Catholic laity, the indiscriminate dismissal of all the Protestant shop assistants in the employment of Catholics in Queenstown, solely on account of their being Protestant, and with having brought about the banishment from Ireland and ruined the business of a Catholic shopkeeper for refusing to discharge a Protestant employee when ordered to do so by the plaintiffs.

During the year stated, the plaintiffs alone were the Catholic religious authorities in Queenstown, and the statements in the article constituted, they alleged, a gross libel on them and the said story was a deliberately concocted tissue of false and calumnious statements, fabricated and published to defame their character and reputation.

The defence was that the article was contributed to the paper by a person who was believed by the defendants to possess intimate knowledge of Irish religious affairs, that it was written and published in good faith, and as a matter of public interest, and was not intended to reflect upon the plaintiffs; that the words "Roman Catholic authorities" did not and were not intended to apply to the plaintiffs, and the statements were published in the bona fide belief that they were true.

EVIDENCE OF MOST REV DR BROWNE

Most Rev Dr Browne, Bishop of Cloyne, examined by Mr Ure, said he had been Bishop of Cloyne for more than 17 years. For many years he was prominently associated with both Catholics and Protestants on the public boards of Queenstown and the County and City of Cork.

He first saw the matter complained of reported in the *Cork Examiner* and read it. The meaning he attached to it - and the only meaning it conveyed or that could be attached to it - was that he and his clergy were infamously slandered in the article.

What did you read it as imputing to you? - "It imputed to us very shameful conduct, conduct that was dishonourable and uncharitable and unjust, that we had published orders for the indiscriminate dismissal of Protestants on the grounds of religion by their Catholic employers and had ruined the business of a Catholic shopkeeper because he refused to obey these monstrous orders to dismiss a Protestant from his employment."

Is there a shred of foundation for that? - "Not one shred of foundation."

To further questions witness said that he alone held religious authority in the diocese, subject only to the Pope, and through delegation, the priests were associated with him. The article was calculated to do himself and his priests most serious injury. It injured them in many respects. It injured them grievously, first, as citizens. He held his honour dear, and so did every clergyman and every decent man. It was a dishonourable thing to charge them with such base conduct as that.

He held, as Bishop, a prominent place, not only in Queenstown, but in the city of Cork, and through the extent of his wide diocese. He did not wish to say much of himself, but he was pretty well known throughout Ireland. He was for twenty years in the National Ecclesiastical College in Maynooth and for nine years held the highest post - that of President. It was a college rather famous in Ireland and beyond Ireland. Every year out of that college scores of priests were sent.

The injury the article did him as a public citizen was very great. He was represented before his Protestant fellow countrymen, before the respectable Protestants whom he met on public boards, as a contemptible, doubled-dyed and double-dealing hypocrite, pretending to be kind and just, and here he was reported as having one face for the public and another in private, and a black heart to injure and stab a man because he was a Protestant. That was a shocking thing to be laid to his charge as a public man, but it was most cruel against him as a clergyman and Bishop.

Cross-examined by Mr Murray:

"I suppose you will agree that in political controversy things are said which are sometimes rather extravagant in character?" - That may be so, but under no circumstances is it as much a libel as this is a libel. *The judge: - That does not justify it.*

Mr Murray - I put it to you that the main intent of the article was political, and so was regarded by the *Cork Examiner*? - Witness: "If it was political in the *Courier*, one of the means that they took for political purposes was a most shameful slander of me."

I put it to you that for many years previous to this, the matter of employment of Catholics as against Protestant employees was one of public notoriety in your district? [The Lord Advocate asked that the question be disallowed. It had, he said, obviously no relation whatever to the question that was before the jury. Lord Hunter disallowed the question.]

To further cross-examination witness said that his secretary, Father [William] Browne, [*Photographer Fr Francis Browne's brother*] was curate in the parish, like the others, and had authority as the others.

"It is not said in the article that orders were issued by the Roman Catholic religious authorities at Queenstown?" - Oh, I need not say that that distinction would not apply to any human being. Surely the meaning of the sentence is not to be decided on the words alone, but on the context as well, and no man of common sense would put a meaning on them other than that it was done at Queenstown.

"I suggest that is a matter for the jury?" - Well, don't ask me.

"Has the article hurt you in your pocket?" - It has not, but it has hurt my character. That is something dearer to me than my pocket - honour and reputation. He that filches from me my good name, etc.

"Do you mean that your well-known reputation, of which we have heard so much, has been injured?" - Certainly.

"In the eyes of whom?" - In the eyes of those with whom I associate. If this went uncontradicted and unpunished, these men would regard me in a very different light to what they regarded me before. Then, as to my own people, I feel I should go amongst them with my head down if I were guilty of conduct like that. Then, as to the clergy through the country, in their minds I would have fallen very low indeed if I were to preach any such doctrine as that alleged. My brother Bishops would look on me with amazement that I was accused of such a crime. The priests from Maynooth College are everywhere - in Scotland, England and America. These men knew me as President. I was largely charged with the formation of their character, and what would they say as to their former President doing a thing of this character? If a priest has not a good character, he is lost. Excuse me for making a speech.

The Judge - He gave you an opening. (laughter).

Mr Murray - "You desire to vindicate your character?" - Yes, by damages on the man who did all he could to ruin my character.

"Is it money?" - Reparation. If he could repair my character without money, let him keep his money.

Evidence was taken from a number of other witnesses, including priests of the parish. Rev Father William Francis Browne gave evidence that the meaning he attached to the word "proclaimed" came to the same thing as boycotting. He didn't think he met anybody who believed the charges, but he met many who were indignant at them. In his own neighbourhood he did not think they would be believed, but elsewhere they might be.

The one witness called for the defence had to do with the limited circulation of the *Dundee Courier* in Ireland. William Shepherd, in charge of the distribution department, said they only sent one copy of the paper daily to Ireland. They had four subscribers in Ireland, but the other three took the paper only on certain days of the week.

The next day saw closing speeches. Mr Murray KC, for the defence, contended that the keynote of the article was politics and nothing but politics, and the jury was bound to look at the intent with which the article was written. It was quite true that he had not attempted to plead the truth of the alleged charges. That was because nobody in his senses would have dreamt of such foolishness.

With regard to the injury to character, he thought the plaintiffs were in a simple dilemma. The people who knew the pursuers did not believe a word of the alleged charges. The people who did not know them had not the remotest notion to whom the charges referred. To say that there had been injury to reputation was nonsense.

Lord Hunter, in his charge to the jury, said that if an odious charge was made, and it was proved to be false, the jury was bound to award substantial damages, not by way of recompense, but as a solatium for the annoyance, and to mark disapprobation of the unwarrantable character of the slander.

THE VERDICT

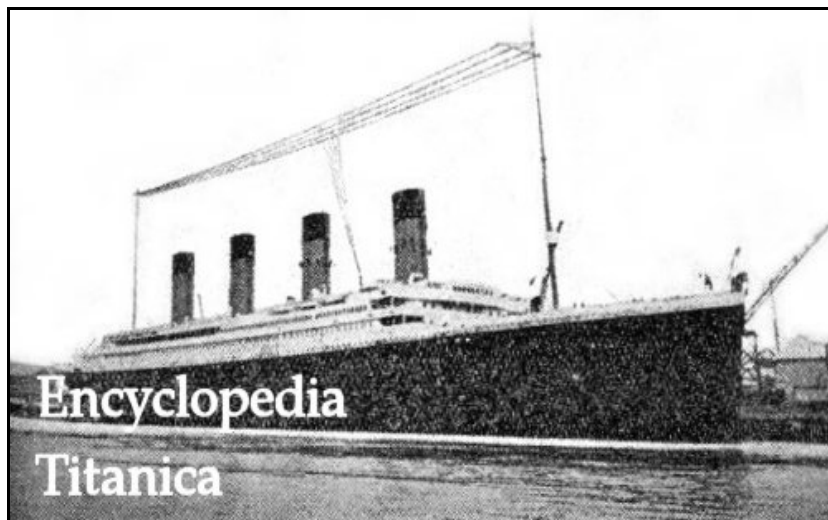
The jury found unanimously for plaintiffs and awarded Most Rev Dr Browne £200 damages and each of the six priests £50 damages.

(*Weekly Freeman*, 16th March, 1912, p. 19)

THE rest is history. Fr Francis Browne embarked the *Titanic* at Southampton on a ticket bought at James Scott & Co., shipping agents in Queenstown, and charged to the Bishop's Palace up the hill from the waterfront. Fr Browne brought with him on board a new camera - which his biographer, Fr Eddie O'Donnell, believes was also paid for by Bishop Browne as a further gift to his nephew.

It may not be putting it too high to say that if the *Dundee Courier* had not libelled the good Bishop, the world of Titanica would be very much the poorer through not having Fr Browne's unique portfolio of photographs, taken in home waters in the early stages of her one and only voyage across the Atlantic.

That they survive for posterity is lucky indeed, although the priestly Brownes might point out that God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform.



Cleaning teams working on two forward funnels

Courtesy of Senan Molony

Fr Browne was inordinately interested in wonders, including the unseen sorcery of wireless. His collection demonstrates that he visited the *Titanic's* Marconi room, a place normally totally out of bounds to passengers. Such devotion might even have led him to possess an extraordinary image of the *Titanic*, taken at

Southampton, which shows off the vessel's aerials to best effect – a picture that is not included in the recognised Browne canon.

This photograph survived in the effects of Fr Henry Gill, a contemporary of Fr Browne and a Jesuit colleague (member of the Society of Jesus religious order) in Dublin. Fr Gill, who published regularly on wireless telegraphy, was at Belvedere religious community with Browne in 1912.

Browne gave Fr Gill some *Titanic* pictures to illustrate a lecture in May 1912, as the article below relates.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY

Lecture by Father Henry Gill, S.J.

On Monday, May 6th (1912), a crowded house had the pleasure of hearing Fr Henry Gill, S.J., B.A. of Belvedere House, lecture on Wireless Telegraphy. Fr Gill, as is well known, did a brilliant course of scientific research at Cambridge, and in a recent lecture Sir J.J. Thompson, F.R.S., paid a high tribute to his "able and valuable work and his great power of dealing with physical problems." Consequently something above the ordinary was expected from such an eminent scientist, and those who were present at the lecture were not disappointed. The *Freeman's Journal* gave a long account, as well as a leading article, to the lecture. The following are extracts from the report published in the *Freeman* :-

The lecture on Wireless Telegraphy delivered last night at the theatre of Belvedere College by Father Henry Gill, S.J., was attended by a crowded audience, whose interest in the subject was doubtless intensified by the recent disaster to the *Titanic*, and in conjunction with which the science so ably treated of by the learned Jesuit, has come so prominently before the public mind. The lecture was profusely illustrated with slides from actual photographs taken on board the *Titanic* by Rev. F. Browne, S.J., on the voyage from Southampton to Queenstown, and these include one of the Marconi room in the ill-fated vessel. Seldom has the community been more impressed and horrified by a great calamity than at the loss of the *Titanic*, the masterpiece of engineering and electrical skill. The proceeds were devoted to the families of those who perished in the disaster, amounting to £44 1s. 6d.

THAT Gill had an original *Titanic* photograph in his personal effects, and that Browne had given him *Titanic* images, suggests that Browne could have possessed – and disbursed – other *Titanic* pictures that do not form part of his own *Titanic* album.

In the course of this article, Browne biographer Fr Eddie O'Donnell will offer his opinion that further photographs were taken, and outline the reasons for that belief. First, let us consider a 1912 newspaper contribution by Browne which

offers a list of possible locations on the vessel that might have been captured in his lens.

Published anonymously in the *Cork Constitution* on Saturday April 13, 1912 (the day before disaster struck in mid-Atlantic) the present writer has identified the following as coming from the pen of Fr Browne himself:

**A SALOON PASSENGER'S
IMPRESSIONS**

Interesting Notes

"Look how that ship is rolling, I never thought it was so rough." The voice was a lady's, and the place was the sun deck of the *Titanic*. We had just got well clear of the eastern end of the Isle of Wight, and were shaping our course down the English Channel towards Cherbourg.

The ship that had elicited the remark was a large three-masted sailing vessel, which rolled and pitched so heavily that over her bows the seas were constantly breaking. But up where we were - some 60ft above the water line - there was no indication of the strength of the tossing swell below. This indeed, is the one great impression I received from my first trip in the *Titanic* - and everyone with whom I spoke shared it - her wonderful steadiness. Were it not for the brisk breeze blowing along the decks, one would have scarcely imagined that every hour found us some twenty knots further upon our course. And then this morning, when the full Atlantic swell came upon our port side, so stately and measured was the roll of the mighty ship that one needed to compare the movement of the side with the steady line of the clear horizon.

After a windy night on the Irish Sea, when the sturdy packet boat tossed and tumbled to her heart's content - by the way, have ships a heart? - the lordly contempt of the *Titanic* for anything less than a hurricane seemed most marvellous and comforting.

But other things besides her steadiness filled us with wonder. Deck over deck and apartment after apartment lent their deceitful aid to persuade us that instead of being on the sea we were still on terra firma. It is useless for me to attempt a description of the wonders of the saloon - the smoking room with its inlaid mother-of-pearl, the lounge with its green velvet and dull polished oak, the

reading room with its marble fireplace and deep soft chairs and rich carpet of old rose hue - all these things have been told over and over again and only lose in the telling. So vast was it all that after several hours on board some of us were still uncertain of our way about, though we must state that, with commendable alacrity and accuracy, some 325 found their way to the great dining room at 7.32, when the bugle sounded the call to dinner. After dinner, as we sat in the beautiful lounge listening to the White Star orchestra playing the "Tales of Hoffman" and "Cavalleria Rusticana" selection, more than once we heard the remark, "You would never imagine you were on a ship." Still harder was it to



**Titanic adjusts course en route from
Cherbourg to Queenstown.**

Courtesy of the Father Browne S.J. Collection

believe that up on the top deck it was blowing a gale, but we had to go to bed, and this reminds me that on the *Titanic* the expression is literally accurate. Nowhere were the berths of other days seen, and everywhere comfortable oaken bedsteads gave place to furniture in the famous suites beloved by millionaires. Then the morning plunge in the great swimming bath, where the ceaseless ripple of the tepid sea water was almost the only indication that somewhere in the distance 72,000 horses in the guise of steam engines fretted and strained under the skilful guidance of the engineers, and after the plunge a half-hour in the gymnasium helped to send one's blood coursing freely, and created a big appetite for the morning meal.

But if the saloon of the *Titanic* is wonderful, no less so is the second class, and in its degree the third class. A word from the genial purser acted as the "Open Sesame" of the Arabian Nights, and secured us an English officer and his son [*cross-channel passenger Major G.T. Noel and his son, of Shortlands, Devon*], whose acquaintance I had made at lunch, and a free passage through all the floating wonder.

Lifts and lounges and libraries are not generally associated in the public mind with second-class accommodation, yet in the *Titanic* all are found. It needed the assurance of our guide that we had left the saloon and were really in second class.

On the crowded third class deck were hundreds of English, Dutch, Italian and French mingling in happy fellowship, and when we wandered down among them we found that for them too the *Titanic* was a wonder. No more general cabins, but hundreds of comfortable rooms, with two, four, or six berths, each beautifully covered in red and white coverlets. Here too are lounges and smoking rooms, less magnificent than those amidships to be sure, but none the less comfortable, and which, with the swivel chairs and separate tables in the dining rooms, struck me as not quite fitting in with my previous notion of steerage accommodation.

ONLY six adults, all saloon passengers, disembarked at Queenstown. The likelihood is thus already very strong that this article is an unrecognised piece by Fr Francis Browne, who had lived in Queenstown and was certainly familiar with local pressmen, such that he might be prevailed upon to write a piece. The others who disembarked, essentially the Odell group, were going on holidays and not ordinarily resident in the country.

Support for this authorship is found by comparing the article here with a piece written by Fr Browne weeks later for the *Belvederian*, the Dublin school journal he founded.

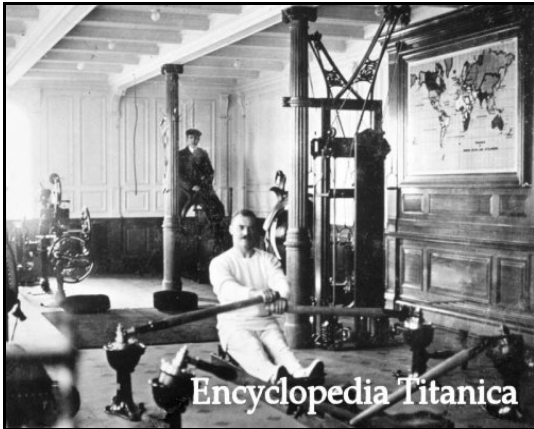
In this latter piece, Browne's phraseology is uncannily reminiscent of this pre-sinking description by the "Saloon Passenger."

Where the newspaper article refers to the "genial purser," Browne's later account tells of a visit to the purser's office where a letter of introduction served as a passport to the "genial friendship of Mr McElroy."

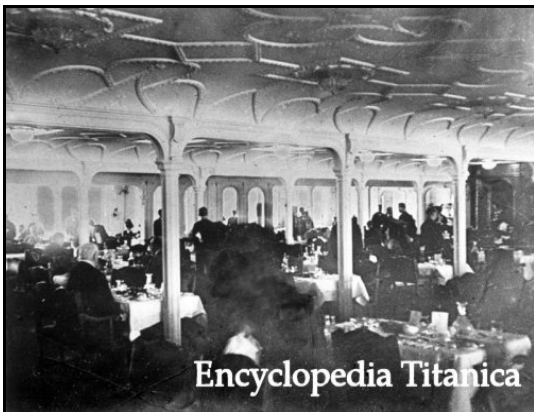
Similar features in both articles are references to "inlaid mother of pearl" in the smoking room, the use of the phrase "sun deck," and "four-masted sailing ships and cross Channel packets tossing in the choppy sea."

FR BROWNE: THE MISSING PHOTOGRAPHS

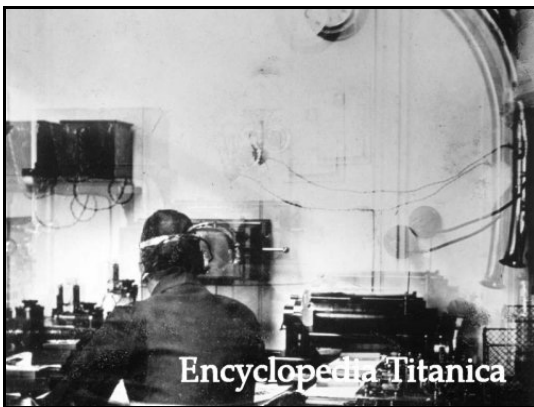
The known Browne piece mentions the dinner bugle, the widespread impression of not being at sea at all, and listening to the orchestra after dinner. Furthermore he exchanged letters with Major Noel, who must be the anonymous Saloon Passenger's "English officer," and even sent him a set of his photographs taken on board. Thus the Saloon Passenger is Fr Browne — shedding new light on how he visited every inch of the *Titanic* over the course of April 10th and 11th, 1912.



The Gymnasium



The Dining Saloon



The Wireless Room

All courtesy of the Father Browne S.J.
Collection

The obvious point is that Fr Browne's extant photographs do not show every place he is now known to have visited.

Fr Eddie O'Donnell, Fr Browne's biographer and the curator of his vast photographic collection, supports the present writer's contention that the 'Saloon Passenger' is Fr Browne. Known around the world as E. E. O'Donnell through his editorship of a dozen books of Fr Browne photographs, it was Fr Eddie who rediscovered 42,000 Fr Browne negatives in a trunk in the basement of the Provincial House of the Society of Jesus in Eglinton Road, Donnybrook, Dublin, in 1985, the same year the *Titanic* herself was found.

Some *Titanic* photographs were included in the trunk, but were unique in being positives, while all others were negatives!

Eddie had heard, of course, of the album of *Titanic* photographs taken by his religious confrère so many decades earlier. Indeed, the album itself, then valued at over a quarter of a million

pounds, was securely locked in the bursar's safe. But the total absence of any *Titanic* negatives has led Fr Eddie to speculate on what became of them.

“It may be that they are still in some newspaper library in Britain, perhaps that of the inheritors of the *Daily Sketch*,” he says. “We know he sold the pictures within days of the disaster, and the purchasers may have wanted the negatives as well to ensure that they had full exclusivity.”

But Fr Eddie has another theory, one that is fairly dramatic in its possible ramifications:

“It is possible that there are many other *Titanic* negatives taken by Fr Browne still in existence, which we have not seen because he did not print them up.

“Everything that was in the photo album was printed in Fr Browne's *Titanic* book (which sold over 100,000 hardback copies in 57 countries and was even translated into Hungarian.) But I would consider that it is likely he took many other pictures which he did not print up, for whatever reason.



Eddie O'Donnell examines one of Fr Browne's negatives.

Courtesy of Senan Molony

“I have seen his other albums and treatments of subjects, and it seems that in these cases he used about one-third of the images available to him. This suggests that in the case of the *Titanic* pictures, he may have taken twice as many more pictures which we have not seen. No-one knows where those negatives are now.”

Fr Eddie says that Fr Browne's account of his *Titanic* trip, published in the 1912 *Belvederian*, and the newly-identified Browne account, together must mean that Fr Browne travelled throughout the ship, and not just in first class. We now know that he paid extensive visits to second class and steerage, and to the transatlantic post office.

Therefore the strong possibility exists that Fr Browne took photos of the steerage accommodation, of the mail room on *Titanic*, the Turkish bath, swimming pool, purser's office, smoking room and reading room. Indeed, such are his mentions of the orchestra and his penchant for photographs of people in activity, that he may have snapped the *Titanic's* band in action. Where might these priceless negatives be now? Fr O'Donnell has no idea, but from his intimate knowledge of Browne, believes firmly that additional photographs were taken. The staggering chance exists of a new momentous find.

FOR the sake of completion, there next appears a report from the *Cork Examiner* of a *Titanic* lecture and slide show of his photographs given by Fr Browne in Queenstown shortly after the sinking. This came less than a week after the lecture by Fr Gill, also using Fr Browne photographs, in an entirely different city (Dublin), 160 miles away.

While it is likely that the photographs used in both lectures were the same, there must also be a possibility that they were not – and that the Browne trove was split between two wireless-obsessed Jesuits in May 1912. This is the *Cork Examiner* account:

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY

LECTURE BY REV. F.M. BROWNE, S.J.

A highly interesting and thoroughly enjoyable lecture on wireless telegraphy was delivered by Rev. Francis M. Browne, S.J., in the hall of the Queenstown Catholic Young Men's Society on Sunday evening [May 12, 1912]. The proceeds were devoted to the *Titanic* Fund, and it was not surprising, with such a worthy object in view, to find the attendance assume large dimensions.

The spacious hall was well filled, and the remarks of the eloquent lecturer were followed with the deepest interest. The lecture was illustrated by numerous experiments and a unique series of photographs taken on the *Titanic* during her trip from Southampton to Queenstown. Rev. W. F. Browne [*Fr Browne's brother*] occupied the chair and amongst those present were...[/]

The Rev. President said that it generally fell to his lot to introduce lecturers in that hall, but, as he said before, he found it a rather a difficult matter to introduce the lecturer of that evening because he knew too much about him (laughter). The lecturer would deal with wireless telegraphy. Most of them had experience of what speaking on the telephone was, but they did not know so much about the sending of wireless messages, and it would, therefore, be very interesting to them to get an explanation about such an important matter (applause).

The Rev. Lecturer, who was most cordially received, said that perhaps the audience had heard that he had had the rather unique opportunity of travelling from Southampton to Queenstown on the

Titanic, and that he had taken a number of photographs on board the vessel that were of a good deal of interest.

As regards the *Titanic*, they were all aware of the unfortunate sequel to its maiden voyage, and it was on behalf of the cause of the sufferers from that disaster that he ventured to trespass himself upon that audience that night.

They had often heard of Marconigrams. Perhaps they knew how such messages were sent, and perhaps they did not know. If they wanted to know how they were sent, the best thing for him to do was to read for them an extract from a paper read before the Royal Institute by Mr Marconi himself. That extract was as follows:

“Wireless telegraphy is operated by electric waves, which are created by alternating currents of very high frequency induced in suitably placed elevated wires or capacity areas. These waves are received or picked up at a distant station on other elevated conductors, tuned to the period of the waves, and the latter are revealed to our senses by means of appropriate detectors.”

Taking the words of Mr Marconi as his text, the rev. lecturer then proceeded to explain in detail the meaning of the inventor’s words. In the first place, the scientific conception of a wave was explained by means of a number of experiments with a system of pendulums.

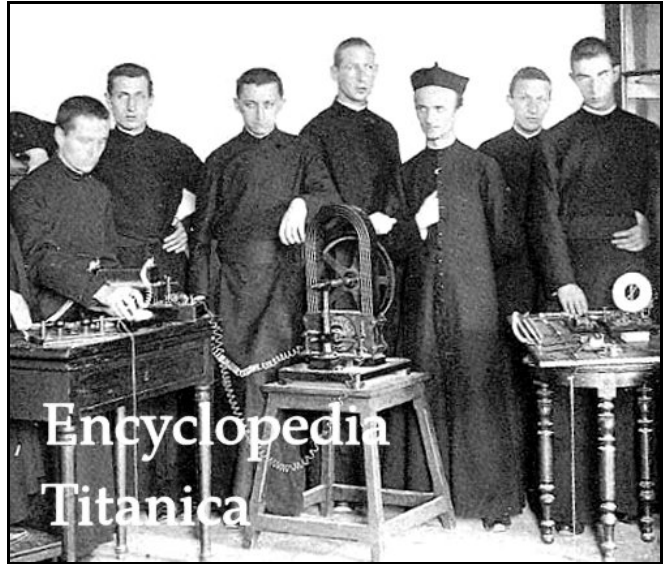
Then the phenomena of resonance – so intimately connected with the “tuning” of the Marconi apparatus – were explained by some interesting experiments with tuning forks and resonance apparatus. Having thus cleared the ground by the explanation of waves, the rev. lecturer described production of electric waves by means of the induction coil and the Hertz oscillators.

Then, pressing a key, an electric bell attached to a Marconi apparatus situated at the middle of the hall some forty feet from the platform immediately responded. This introduced the second part of the demonstration, which dealt with the Marconi receiver. Having fully explained the instrument, the rev. lecturer said it was now his duty to thank the gentlemen who had so kindly lent him the apparatus with which he had given those demonstrations... [/] (applause)

The lights were then lowered, and a large number of photographs taken by the rev. lecturer while on board the *Titanic*, in addition to views of the scenes at Queenstown on the occasions of the departure of liners and photos of other large ships, were then thrown on the screen, and were followed with the deepest interest.

The slides were signalled by Marconigrams. Opening this portion of the lecture with a view of a special train with a large number of passengers for the *Titanic* leaving Waterloo Station for Southampton, pictures were then shown of numerous apartments on board, etc., and these views won general admiration and were heartily appreciated.

Snapshots of the Marconigrams sent out by the operator on board the ship when she met with accident were given, and the rev. lecturer explained that these Marconigrams could be sent much more easily from north to south than from east to west, and more easily by night than by day. Mr Marconi said that those were mysteries not yet answered, and it remained for future scientists to explain that. In conclusion, he showed a picture of Mr Marconi, which evoked hearty applause, and said that while they said good night let them think and pray for those who went down to the sea in ships (applause).



Jesuit students at Belvedere with wireless equipment in 1911.
Courtesy of Senan Molony

FR BROWNE: THE MISSING PHOTOGRAPHS

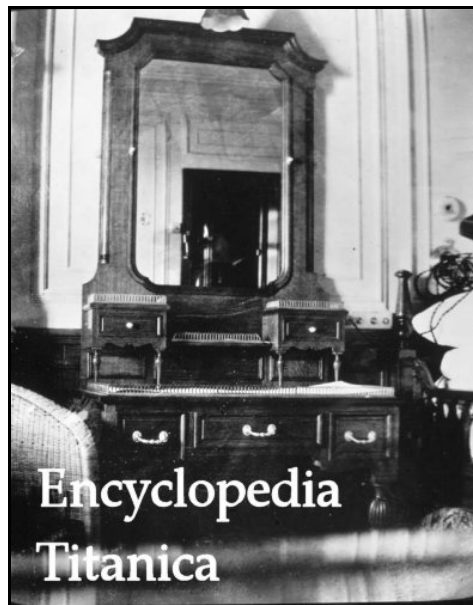
Rev Fr. O'Connor said that he desired to say, on behalf of every member of the audience, as well as on his own behalf, that they were deeply grateful to the Rev. Fr Browne for his lecture that evening (hear, hear). A splendid lecture had been delivered to them and they would always remember the remarks of the lecturer (hear, hear). They came into the rooms, perhaps, with hazy ideas of wireless telegraphy, but he thought, after the very interesting and lucid remarks of Fr Browne, that each and every one of them could now deliver a little lecture on the subject.

The lecturer's remarks had been quite clear and interesting (hear, hear). The pictures that had been shown were of pathetic interest to the people of Queenstown. They had all been interested in the great ship the *Titanic*, and they were all grieved to hear of her fate (hear, hear). They were deeply grateful to Father Browne for his lecture, and they hoped that he would live long to give lectures of that kind to instruct and entertain them (applause).

The rev. lecturer suitably returned thanks, and the interesting proceedings concluded.

(*Cork Examiner*, Wednesday 15th May, 1912, p.8)

THE crucial words above are of photographs being shown of “numerous apartments on board.” The Fr Browne album shows only *two* “apartments” – being the gym and the Marconi room. All the rest were exteriors.



A figure — thought to be Father Browne himself — reflected in the mirror of his dressing table.

Courtesy of the Father Browne S. J. Collection

In Browne's small discard pile are two blurry images of his cabin (showing Fr Browne reflected in the mirror on a dressing table) and damaged pictures of the *Titanic* first class dining room and the reading and writing room. Another exterior shot is double-exposed with what appears to be a photograph of a private promenade suite, suggested to be that occupied by millionairess Charlotte Drake Cardeza.

Fr O'Donnell notes in his book that Fr Browne surely did not know Mrs Drake Cardeza. Yes, but he certainly knew his fellow Irishman, Titanic purser Hugh McElroy... and McElroy had given him the run of the ship. Pursers are responsible for all accommodations on shipboard, and McElroy could have thrown open any room he wished.

A word from the purser acted as an *Open Sesame*... as the Saloon Passenger delightedly writes. And Fr Browne never could resist an opulent eyeful.

Are there undiscovered *Titanic* pictures taken on board by Fr Browne? No-one knows, but the possibilities are intriguing. Will the ship's bugler ever herald rediscovery with his own photograph in action? Will the faces of the orchestra finally emerge, silently scraping *Cavalleria Rusticana*... ?

Where, in short, are any of the Saloon Passenger's extra impressions?

The editor wishes to thank Davison & Associates and Fr Eddie O'Donnell for the use of images from the Father Browne S. J. Collection.

Visit www.fatherbrowne.com for prints from the Father Browne S. J. Collection.

Visit www.titanicbooksite.com for information on Titanic books by Senan Molony.