

Chicago Girl In Last Lifeboat

Chicago American

Tuesday 23 April 1912

There was only one seat in the last lifeboat of the Titanic and had Mrs. John Burke taken it the chances are that Miss Annie Kelly, a seventeen-year-old Chicago girl, might be at the bottom of the sea, she told friends to-day who had gathered at her home to celebrate her lucky escape when the ship sunk. She received the congratulations of her friends.

Miss Kelly, who arrived in this city from New York, told in a graphic manner conditions in the steerage at the time the ship struck the iceberg and also how she was pushed into the last seat in the last boat.

With Miss Kelly when she arrived here was fifteen-year-old Annie McGowan, niece of Thomas McDermott of 3241 North Ashland avenue, whose aunt, Miss Kate McGowan, perished on the lost ship. The girl was wrenched from her aunt's side and thrust into a boat, which pushed away from the ship. She never saw her relative again.

Annie Kelly and Annie McGowan embarked in the third cabin of the Titanic with the Burke family, which consisted of Mr. and Mrs. John Burke, who were coming to Chicago on their honeymoon, Catherine and Margaret Burke, cousins of John and Margaret Manion, who were bound for this city to join their brother, Edward Manion of 1848 Lincoln avenue. Mrs. Burke was a sister of Miss Ellen McHugh of 45511 Cornell avenue, and a cousin of Mrs. Mary McDermott of 6640 South Robey street.

"I should not have been saved except for Mrs. Burke's refusal to leave her husband and the Misses Burke saying they would not go if their uncle and aunt could not go with them," said Miss Kelly. "I went in the very last boat and I was the very last passenger. The officer said there was room for just one more.

"I was aroused by the call of the stewardess, who told us all to dress as quickly as we could, though she did not explain what was the trouble. I dressed and went upon the second deck. Annie McGowan was with me when I was going up the stairs, but she became separated from me at the head of the stairway, and was carried by the throng over to the other side of the ship. I did not see her again until I was on the Carpathia.

"On the side where I was carried, some wild-looking men were trying to rush into the boats, and the officers and crew fired at them. Some of the men fell. Others were beaten back by the officers who used their pistols on them.

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