

COL. GRACIE DIES, HAUNTED BY TITANIC

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"We Must Get Them All in the Boats," Last Words of the Man Who Helped to Save Many

SAW PARTING OF THE ASTORS

And Testified to the Devotion of Isidor and Ida Straus, Who Preferred Death to Separation

Haunted by his memories of the wreck of the Titanic and never completely recovered from the shock of his experiences in that disaster, Col. Archibald Gracie, U. S. A., retired, died yesterday morning at his apartment at the Hotel St. Louis, in East Thirty-second Street. Death was immediately due to a complication of diseases, but the members of his family and his physicians felt that the real cause was the shock he suffered last April when he went down with the ship and was rescued later after long hours on a half-submerged raft.

After the Carpathia had brought the Titanic survivors to New York Col. Gracie did nothing to banish the tragedy from his thoughts. On the contrary, he spent the succeeding months in correspondence with other survivors, gathering data for his book, "The Truth About the Titanic." The events of the night of the wreck were constantly on his mind. The manuscript of his work on the subject had finally been completed and sent to the printers when his last illness came. In his last hours the memories of the disaster did not leave him. Rather they crowded thicker, and he was heard to say:

"We must get them into the boats. We must get them all into the boats."

Mrs. Gracie and their daughter had been fearful for him for some weeks past. He was well enough, however, to be up and about until shortly before his death, and so recently as Thanksgiving afternoon he attended the reception at the Hotel Gotham which he and Mrs. Gracie gave to introduce their daughter, Edith Temple Gracie.

Col. Gracie was a member of an old New York family, although he himself was born in Mobile, Ala., in 1858, and made his home in Washington. He was the fifth Archibald Gracie in direct descent. He was formerly very well known here in the real estate field, particularly for his part in the sale of the Stevens property in Hoboken to the Lackawanna Railroad. He was married in 1890 to Constance Elise Schack. The ceremony took Calvary Church, Fourth Avenue and Twenty-first Street, and at that same church the funeral services will be held on Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment will be at Woodlawn.

In the wreck of the Titanic Col. Gracie was still clinging to the rail of the topmost deck after the wave had passed that swept her just before her final plunge.

"When the ship plunged down," he said in one of his first accounts of the tragedy, "I was forced to let go, and I was swirled around and around for what seemed an interminable time. Eventually I came to the surface to find the sea a mass of tangled wreckage.

"Luckily, I was unhurt, and, casting about, managed to seize a wooden grating floating near by. When I had recovered my breath I discovered a large canvas and cork life-raft which had floated up. A man,

whose name I did not learn, was struggling toward it from some wreckage to which he had clung. I cast off and helped him to get on the raft, and we then began the work of rescuing those who had jumped into the sea and were floundering in the water.

"When dawn broke there were thirty of us on the raft, standing knee deep in the icy water and afraid to move lest the cranky craft be overturned. Several unfortunates, benumbed and half dead, besought us to save them and one or two made an effort to reach us, but we had to warn them away.

"The hours that elapsed before we were picked up by the Carpathia were the longest and most terrible that I ever spent. We were afraid to turn around and look to see whether we were seen by passing craft, and when some one who was facing the stern passed the word that something that looked like a steamer was coming up, one of the men became hysterical under the strain. The rest of us, too, were near the breaking point."

In his testimony before the Senate Inquiry Committee, telling of the earlier events, Col. Gracie said:

"I saw Mr. Straus and Mrs. Straus, of whom I had seen a great deal during the voyage. I had heard them discussing it---that if they were going to die they would die together. We tried to persuade Mrs. Straus to go alone without her husband. She had, 'No.' He would share his fate with the rest of the men. He would not go beyond. So I left them there.

"About the time we were ordered to take the boats I passed through the A deck, going from the stern toward the bow. I saw four gentlemen in the smoking room, three of whom I recognized as Mr. Millet, Mr. Moore, and Mr. Butt. The fourth gentleman I did not know, but afterward ascertained he was Mr. Ryerson. They seemed to be absolutely intent upon doing what they were doing and disregarding anything that was going on on the decks outside.

"The only incident I remember in particular was when Mrs. Astor was put in the boat. She was lifted up through the window and her husband helped her on the other side, and when she got in her husband was on one side of the window and I was on the other side. At the next window I heard Mr. Astor ask the second officer whether he would be allowed to go aboard this boat to protect his wife. The second officer said: 'No, Sir; no man is allowed in this boat or any of the boats till the ladies are off.' Mr. Astor then said: 'Well, tell me the number of the boat, so I may find her afterward,' or words to that effect. The answer came back, 'No. 4!'"

Col. Gracie was believed to have been the last survivor of the lost Titanic to leave the ship. Shortly before he sailed on her he had undergone an operation and was not in thoroughly restored health when he began the return trip to America.

For the last six years Col. and Mrs. Gracie had spent the social season in Washington. They entertained much. Their home there was at 1,527 Sixteenth Street, N. W.

Courtesy of Mark Baber

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