

## HEROIC PRIESTS GAVE UP LIVES TO QUIET CROWDS

### *Evening World*

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#### **Went Down on Titanic With Men and Women Grouped About Them.**

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**ALL CREEDS IN PRAYER**  
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#### **They Chose Death to Solace Others**

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Two priests of the Roman Catholic Church went down on the Titanic with men and women grouped about them responding to prayers. Not only Catholics, but Protestants and Jews, realizing that their last hour was at hand, took part in the final religious service on the sloping deck of the Titanic as she was heading downward for the depths.

One of the clergymen was Rev. Thomas R. Byles of Westminster Parish, London, who was on his way to this city to officiate at the marriage of his brother in Brooklyn. The other was a German priest who spoke the Hungarian language in addition to his own. Father Byles was in the first cabin. The German priest was in the third cabin. The name of the German priest has not been ascertained.

Both priests celebrated mass for the steerage passengers Sunday morning. Father Byles delivered a sermon in English and French, the other in German and Hungarian. Strangely enough each of the priests spoke of the necessity of man having a lifeboat in the shape of religious consolation at hand in case of spiritual shipwreck.

After the Titanic struck Father Byles made his way to the steerage. He was active in getting the steerage passengers up to the boat deck and assisting women and children to the lifeboats. Of the two clergymen he was the leader not only in rendering material aid to the frightened emigrants, but in keeping the religious aspect of the terrible occasion to the fore.

Three of the survivors who vividly remember the last hours of the heroic English priest are Miss Ellen Mocklare, a pretty dark-haired young girl from Galway, now at her sister's home No. 412 Seventeenth street; Miss Bertha Moran, who has gone to Troy, N. Y., and Miss McCoy, who is in St. Vincent's Hospital. These told their story in concert at the hospital today.

When the crash came we were thrown from our berths." said Miss Mocklare. "Slightly dressed, we prepared to find out what had happened. We saw before us, coming down the passageway, with his hand uplifted, Father Byles. We knew him because he had visited us several times on board and celebrated mass for us that very morning.

"'Be calm, my good people,' he said and then he went about the steerage giving absolution and blessings."

"Meanwhile the stewards ordered us back to bed," spoke up Miss McCoy, "but we would not go."

"A few around us became very excited," Miss Mocklare continued, "and then it was that the priest again raised his hand and instantly they were calm once more. The passengers were immediately impressed by the absolute self-control of the priest. He began the recitation of the rosary. The prayers of all, regardless of creed, were mingled and the responses, "Holy Mary," were loud and strong.

"Continuing the prayers," said Miss Bertha Moran, "he led us to where the boats were being lowered. Helping the women and children in he whispered to them words of comfort and encouragement."

"One sailor," said Miss Mocklare, "warned the priest of his danger and begged him to board a boat. Father Byles refused. The same seaman spoke to him again and he seemed anxious to help him, but he refused again. Father Byles could have been saved, but he would not leave while one was left and the sailor's entreaties were not heeded. "After I got in the boat, which was the last one to leave, and we were slowly going further away from the ship, I could hear distinctly the voice of the priest and the responses to his prayers. Then they became fainter and fainter, until I could only hear the strains of 'Nearer My God, to Thee' and the screams of the people left behind. We were told by the man who rowed our boat that we were mistaken as to the screams and that it was the people singing, but we knew otherwise." "Did all the steerage get a chance to get on deck?" She was asked.

"I don't think so, because a great many were there when our boat went out, but there were no more boats, and I saw Father Byles among them.

"A young man who was in the steerage with us helped me into the boat. It was cold and I had no wrap. Taking off the shirt he was wearing, he put it around my shoulders, used the suspenders to keep it from blowing undone and then stepped back in the crowd."

Wedding bells, quickly followed by a funeral march, changed on Saturday, what was to have been the happiest day in the lives of Miss Isabel Katherine Russell and W. E. Byles. More than two thousand people were expected to be present.

The ceremony was to have been performed in St Augustine's Church and the Rev. Thomas R.D. Byles of Ongar, Essex County, England, brother of the groom, was asked to officiate.

Miss Russell and Mr. Byles did not give up hope that Father Byles had been saved until every passenger had arrived from the Carpathia. They returned to the Russell residence, No. 119 Pacific street, and, by telephone and telegram, recalled the numerous invitations.

Believing in the superstition, however, that it is bad luck to postpone a wedding, the ceremony was performed Saturday by the rev. Wm. F. M. [?]nis D. D., a life-long friend of the bride, in St. Paul's Church. The bride wore her white satin gown which had been imported from Paris, and was attended by her sister, Miss Rosa D[?]sell. Only relatives and a few im[?] friends were present.

Instead of the usual reception [?] wedding breakfast following, the [?] party hastened home, and, donning garments of mourning, returned to the church, where the rev. Father Flannery, rector, performed a requiem mass for the late father.

