

## Human Buzzards of Sea Sink With Titanic

### ***Chicago Inter Ocean***

Saturday 20 April 1912

*Special Dispatch to the Inter-Ocean*

New York, April 19.—Figures familiar to Forty-Second street will be missing in the cafes of the Great White Way when the lights are brightest as one of the results of the foundering of the Titanic. Pictures in the rogues' gallery will be turned to the wall. The police will strike from their records the name of more than one man "wanted."

There went down with the great White Star liner a flock of buzzards of the sea, human vampires who preyed on the passengers crossing the Atlantic, men whose mission in life inspired Wilson Mizner's play, "The Greyhound." It is known that at least a score of these harpies were on board the lost ocean liner.

Old time card and confidence men had been waiting on the other side for months to procure passage on the big ship, anticipating the haul of their lives. It looked to them like an orchard of big plums. Their business was to get on board and do the picking. Some of these men had been "following the sea" for years—their home was the sea. And now by one of the inscrutable tricks of fate their burial place is the sea.

It is impossible to get the names of all of them, for they invariably traveled under assumed names, sometimes as millionaires, sometimes merely as well to do manufacturers. It is known on the Great White Way that no less than a half dozen gangs of the crooks were waiting to embark on the steamer. Reports reached here that some of them got away in the lifeboats, and it is an even bet on Broadway that if there was a chance "for a minute" more than one got into the boats as a sailor or as a shrieking woman in distress.

"Buffalo" Murphy, it is said, is numbered among those who went to the bottom in the Titanic. "Old Man" Jordan is another, and Jim Kitchener is said to have found his last "sitting." "One Arm" Mac has found his last "sitting." Silverton is another who is said to have "lost out" on the wrong confidence game.

Silverton is credited with having been gifted with the greatest "gall" of all the merchant sailors of the sea. The story is told on the Rialto that he was the mainspring of Mizner's "Greyhound," that he was the "greyhound" himself. He traveled under various aliases, one being J. Brayton Coleman. Once he met the original on board ship, and that was a very disastrous voyage for him. Mr. Coleman heard of his impersonation and went to Silverton's stateroom and, pulling him out of bed, administered to him the soundest thrashing he had ever known.

The passing of "Buffalo" Murphy is a "cinch" according to advices from the other side. He was booked on the Titanic, as usual assuming the name of J. W. White, the chewing gum man of national reputation. Murphy was a steady ocean traveler in the spring and summer season. For the last fifteen years he never missed a trip and the Titanic looked to him the biggest game that he had ever been permitted to "sit in." He was "lost in the shuffle," at which he had been so great an adept. He was one of the original street fair fakers and an all around "skin game" man. He never spent a cent and was said to be worth \$200,000,

"Old Man" Jordan was 80 years old and they say along Broadway that he had been cheating for

seventy-five of these years. He was comfortably fixed in France&mdash;was well off, in fact&mdash;but the lure of the first trip of the Titanic was too much for him. He yielded for the last time to the call of the sea and "cashed in," in response to the call. He has played the gamut of the crooks from gold bricks to green goods and generally got the money.

Jim Kitchener hailed from the Middle West and was one the best card sharpers in the country. He had "followed the sea" for the last ten years, playing the ocean seasons as other men played the races. Only he took no chances and got away with the coin. He played the game once too often.

#### "One Arm" Got Money

"One Arm" Mac had all the card men on both sides of the Atlantic backed off the board. He used his arm to better advantage than most men use both members. The fact that he had only one wing rarely attracted suspicion to him, and he raked in the money fast. He had impersonated nearly every big business man in the world. No doubt is entertained that Mac has "passed" for the last time.

"Black Mike"&mdash;nobody seems to have known what his name really was&mdash;was another of the old time crooks who has been gathered in by the Great Policeman. There will be no further need for his picture, which adorned the rogues' gallery. Mike was one of the old time and surest of "con" men. His great stunt was tapping the wires. He made his victim believe that he was getting inside information on the races by having a confederate tap the wires. He never tapped the wires, but always got the money. He made baskets of money, but the fare banks got most of it in the wind-up.

Chicago Inter Ocean, Saturday, April 20, 1912, p 1, c. 3

---

Courtesy of Thomas E. Golembiewski

Copyright Encyclopedia Titanica - [www.encyclopedia-titanica.org](http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org) 1996-2011 and third parties (ref: #5509)

URL : <http://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/human-buzzards-sea-sink-with-titanic.html>

---

PDF edition provided for personal reference only.

