

## The informative 'Morning News'

by Senan Molony

### ***Titanic Research***

Thursday 12 February 2009

TWO years after the *Titanic*, and Captain Lord of the *Californian* was still pleading his case.

There follows a freshly resurrected article &ndash; important for the historical record &ndash; published in 1914 in the *Savannah Morning News* of Georgia, and carrying the byline of Captain Lord himself.

In fact it was an original typescript, drafted by Captain Lord's friend Frank Strachan, a US shore agent, and submitted with the Master's approval following an interview with Captain Lord in March 1914.



*Liverpool Echo*

The article, published in the *Morning News Brunswick Evening Banner*

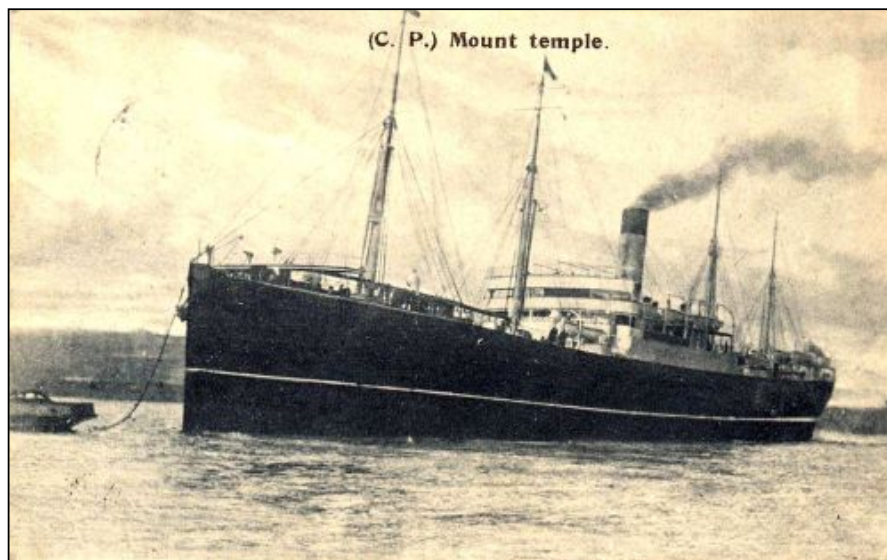
What makes it particularly important, apart from Lord's continuing indignation at being blamed for the disaster, is that he writes about passing a yellow-funnel vessel (discussed by *Californian* officers Stone and Stewart after 4am on the morning of the sinking) while responding to late news of the emergency.



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The 1914 article establishes that the yellow-funnel ship, seen from the *Californian* at 4am on the eastern side of the icefield, is not the Canadian Pacific liner *andash; which was to the western side.*

Modern claims have been advanced that the 4am yellow-funnel ship was the *Mount Temple*. The article makes it clear this could not have been the case *andash;* as the yellow-funnel was still discerned to the eastern side while the (having traversed the icefield) was heading down to the *Mount Temple*



The way in which the yellow-funnel steamer is mentioned in the following account by Captain Lord, which

is entirely *en passant*, makes it very hard to believe that it could possibly be a construct on Lord's part.

## Savannah Morning News.

### HOW CAPT. LORD WASN'T A HERO

"Californian's" Conduct.

### SAYS DECISION WAS UNJUST

He Explains Why He Didn't Go to the "Titanic."

By Capt. Lord

Of the Steamship *Californian*, who was in Savannah yesterday.



**Captain Lord**  
*Boston Globe*

During the *Titanic* inquiry in England, presided over by Lord Mersey, myself and other officers of the

*Californian* were only permitted to answer questions, and not to present evidence. As I was never officially charged with anything, or on trial, I could make no statements until the decision of the court, which sat over two months, the decision being rendered in August, 1912, the full text of the findings being as follows:

*Californian Titanic* time of the disaster. The evidence from the *Titanic Californian* was surrounded was loose ice extending for a distance of no more than two or three miles in the direction of the *Titanic*. The night was clear and the sea was smooth. When she first saw the rockets the *Californian* could have pushed through the ice to the open water without any serious risk and so have come to the assistance of the *Titanic*. Had she done so she might have saved many if not all of the lives that were lost."

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This was so manifestly unjust to myself and the *Californian* that I at once published evidence in British newspapers showing clearly that the *Californian* could not have been in the position assigned to her by Lord Mersey. Furthermore, other nautical men, complete strangers to me, voluntarily took up the question, dissected the evidence, and published articles in the proving conclusively the *Californian* was not the vessel that was so close to the *Titanic*. I also received numbers of letters from experienced shipmasters, many of whom I had never heard of, voluntarily sympathising with the injustice done to the *Californian* and myself.

*Californian*, I would submit the following facts, which I believe have not heretofore been published in America:

*Californian*

*Titanic* was behind the *Californian*, bound to New York, but as she was steaming about 22 knots per hour was naturally making faster speed towards America than the *Californian*, but the two vessels were on different tracks &ndash; the *Californian* was on the Boston track, whilst the *Titanic* was on the New York track; the Boston track being some nineteen miles north of the New York track in the particular vicinity where the casualty occurred.

*Californian's* position was definitely established by the customary noon meridian observation of the sun at latitude 42 degrees 5 minutes, longitude 47 degrees 25 minutes. The ship proceeded on the same compass course, via the Boston track, throughout the afternoon and at 4.30pm clearly established she was following that track by giving her position and reporting by wireless to all steamers with range, that she had then passed three large icebergs about four or five miles to the south of her, giving latitude 42 degrees, 5 minutes, longitude 49 degrees, 9 minutes, this as information and warning to all vessels in the vicinity.

*Californian's* wireless operator was in communication with the wireless operator on the *Titanic*, and the first thing they did was to exchange and compare clock times, as customary. This is proven by an entry in the wireless log book.

*Californian* took a stellar observation with the sextant, establishing the ship's latitude as 42 degrees, 5 minutes, which clearly proves the *Californian*

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*Titanic* and any other ships within range notice that we had encountered the ice field and were stopped for the night surrounded by ice. The *Titanic's* operators were busy sending messages from that ship to America through the wireless station at Cape Race, and told the *Californian* operator to "Shut up and keep out."

*Californian* retired. While talking to the wireless operator at the door of his room a few minutes before 11 o'clock, I saw another steamer approaching, and asked what vessels he had within reach; he replied: "The *Titanic*," whereupon I replied, "That is not the *Titanic*; she is too small and hasn't enough lights." Shortly afterwards this steamer stopped and was bearing S.S.E. about five or six miles from our position.

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Immediately after telling the second officer to find out, I heard him working the key of the Morse signal, and that is the last thing I remember before I fell asleep, having been on duty eighteen hours, and coming from a freezing atmosphere into a steam-heated chart room, I slept very soundly.

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It developed that the second officer had sent an apprentice named Gibson down to tell me that he failed to get any answer to his Morse signals and that he had seen further white signals from the vessel to the south as she was moving away. But if the boy ever opened the door of my room or said anything to me or got any answers it must have been in my sleep, as I am totally unconscious of any such occurrences; and the second officer said had he attached any importance to the signals he would have come down and aroused me himself.

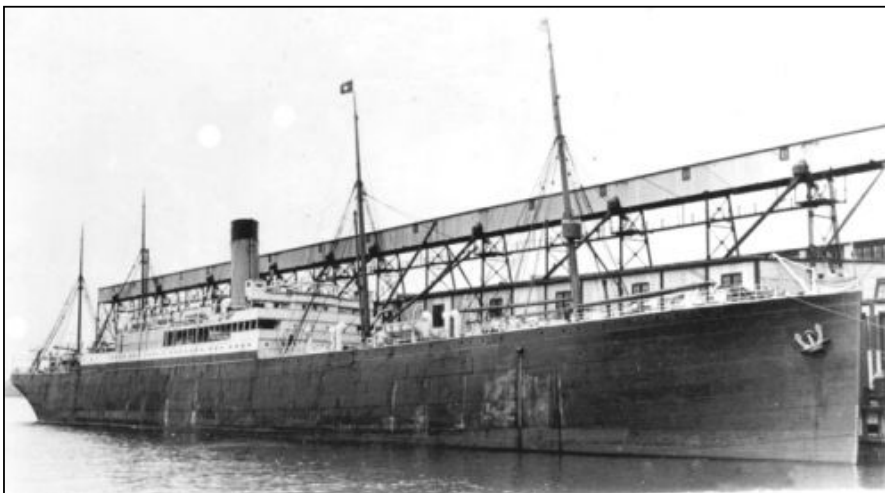
*Frankfurt* that the *Titanic* had sunk during the night, but got no information as to the *Titanic's* position. Afterwards we got news from the Allan Line steamer *Virginian* that the *Titanic* had been sending S.O.S. signals giving her position as latitude 41.46 north, longitude 50.14 west. At this time we gave the *Virginian* our latitude, longitude, etc., which supported the previous position described in the earlier part of this article as having been officially recorded from noon onwards during the afternoon and evening of the previous day.

*Californian* through the ice ahead to clear water beyond, then drove the ship under forced draft in a southerly direction down the water's edge of the ice field some twenty miles. While proceeding in this direction **we passed the four-mast steamer with yellow funnel across the ice field to the east of us, considerably nearer the *Titanic's* position than we had been all night.**

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Passing this steamer and proceeding south, we next passed the steamer *Mount Temple*, lying stopped on the water's edge of the ice field in sight of the *Carpathia*, also the small Leyland Line steamer *Almerian*, which had not wireless and had just arrived on the scene.

*Carpathia*, we worked the *Californian* through the southern end of the ice field, reaching the *Carpathia* at 8.30am, in time to see her taking on board the last boat load of *Titanic* survivors, when she proceeded to New York, and we cruised around among the wreckage in hopes of picking up further survivors; but finding none, nor even bodies, nothing but wreckage, we proceeded to Boston about 11.30am. Captain Rostron also testified he could see no bodies in the vicinity ere he proceeded to New York.



**The** would have presented a similar sight.

*Titanic* did not strike the berg until 11.40, when she sent out her position at latitude 41.46 N., longitude

50.14 west. Long before anyone could have dreamed such a disaster would overtake the *Titanic*, the *Californian's* positions had been clearly established at noon that day, at 6.30pm, and at 7.30pm, by communications and observations recited in the foregoing, which clearly disposes of any attempt on the part of the *Californian* to have cooked or worked up a wrongful position after the accident had happened. A schoolboy can work out the difference in latitude and longitude as given between the position where the *Californian* stopped at 10.20, and the *Titanic*

*Californian's* engines were stopped all night, which was clearly established and never questioned; on the other hand, the testimony of the Captain of the *Mount Temple* and others as to the position of the wreckage at daylight on Monday morning, only about two hours after the ship had foundered, went to prove that the latitude and longitude given by the *Titanic* in her

S.O.S. call was wrong, and the *Titanic* must have been at least five or six miles south of the position she gave, and this was admitted, in fact argued by White Star Line barristers before the Court of Inquiry, and proven on charts by the course and distance steered by the *Titanic* as evidenced by her officers.

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This was also apparent to me on reaching the scene of the wreckage as we had to steam considerably more than nineteen miles to reach there; all of which tends to prove that the *Titanic* was really about twenty-five miles from the *Californian*, rather than five to eight miles as considered by Lord Mersey.

*Californian*, [and] that the *Californian* only came in sight of the *Carpathia* about 8am.

*Almerian* and *Mount Temple*. The captain of the *Mount Temple* also testified that at daybreak he observed another steamer on the western side of the field, having two masts with black funnel and white device. This steamer has never been identified, nor has the four-mast steamer with yellow funnel, passed by us further north ever been identified.

*Californian's* engines were never moved after 10.25pm, and it was a calm, flat, wind-less night. The two lookout men, who were in the crow's nest of the *Titanic*, testified positively that when the *Titanic* collided with the berg, no steamer nor lights were in sight. This, coupled with the fact that the *Californian's* engines were stopped, proves clearly that the steamer observed by the *Titanic* as approaching her about an hour later, could not possibly have been the *Californian*.

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Furthermore, had the *Californian* been in sight of the *Titanic* at the time of the disaster, she would assuredly have been in plain view of the *Carpathia* after daybreak; whereas Capt. Rostron testified that the *Californian* did not come in sight until about 8am. It must be remembered that the chief officer did not wake me until daybreak, and the *Californian's* engines were not moved until about 6 in the morning after we had learned of the disaster.

*Californian* to have been the steamer seen by the *Titanic*. Also it seems self-evident there was at least

one, if not two, steamers between the *Californian* and *Titanic* at the time of the disaster.

*Californian* and the *Titanic* saw the *Titanic's* signals and answered them, but on account of ice failed to reach *Titanic*.

*Titanic's* boats know he had seen their flares.

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Again, I would point out that I never was placed on trial, but simply called as a witness at the *Titanic* hearing and permitted to answer questions. Ever since Lord Mersey's decision has come out I have used every means in my power to secure an official inquiry into the relative positions of *Titanic* and *Californian* on the night of the disaster, and my last letter to the British Board of Trade urged such an inquiry, even going as far as to propose such an inquiry be held, not necessarily for the purpose of submitting fresh evidence, but if necessary simply to deal with the evidence already submitted at the *Titanic* inquiry, but so far I have been unable to secure an inquiry, notwithstanding my several requests to the Board of Trade, urging and courting a full inquiry into the position of my vessel and my own actions on the night of the disaster &ndash; simply an unbiased inquiry based on evidence that has already been submitted at the *Titanic* hearing.

*Saturday Review* of May 24, 1913, and the *Review of Reviews* for July, 1913, and would like to point out that the lamented William T. Stead, who was editor, if not founder and owner of the *Review of Reviews*, lost his life in the *Titanic* disaster, and it is hardly to be supposed that that paper, above all others, would have accorded me the support it does in the article, unless fully convinced there had been a miscarriage of justice and that I have been wrongly condemned by public opinion.

(*Savannah Morning News*)

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**Californian Chief Officer  
George Stewart while  
Master of the (c) Senan  
Molony**

The above article corroborates *Californian*

If this yellow-funnel steamer was 8 miles south of *Californian*, as Captain Lord estimated in evidence, and the *Mount Temple* another 5 to 6 miles south, with *Carpathia* about another 4 miles south, then this puts *Carpathia* about 17 to 18 miles south (not counting the initial east-west traverse) from where the *Californian*

This is despite overnight drift from the time when the *Titanic* sighted her Mystery Ship at close quarters (obviously long before she sank at 2.20am) and the *Californian* beginning to move long after daylight.

Meanwhile the never mentioned the other yellow-funnel vessel.

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Relevant Inquiry Testimony:

The only detailed description of the four-master seen by *Californian* to the southward after 4am (when Chief Officer George Stewart relieved Second Officer Stone) comes from Chief Officer Stewart himself.

**Stewart**

8905 Is it in your mind at all that it was the *Carpathia* you saw? &mdash; "No, I thought it was a funnel boat when the sun was up."

Neither Stone nor Stewart (who had just come on duty) knew where this four-master had come from.

Yet despite Stone's insistence that it was not the vessel he had previously seen during the night, Stewart personally considered that the steamer seen during the night could indeed have gone off to the southwest, but finding the ice impassable there, might have steamed back some distance, unnoticed by Stone. In other words, that it might have been the same vessel Stone and Gibson watched earlier.

Wherever she came from, the yellow-funnel four-master was now, at 4am, between the *Californian* to the north and the to the south (unseen), and all three vessels were still to the of the ice barrier.

Meanwhile the *Mount Temple*, a Canadian Pacific vessel, had arrived at the *Titanic's* SOS position on the **western** side of the ice barrier. She was indeed a four-masted yellow-funnel steamer, but her captain testified that he arrived at the SOS position only at 4.30am, having steamed diagonally NE from far to the south and west of the ice barrier.

By her evidence, the *Mount Temple* was certainly out of sight of the *Californian*

## Lord

"At daylight we saw a yellow-funnel steamer on the southwest of us, beyond where this man had left, about 8 miles away."

Lord: "I should not like to say. I don't think so, because this one had only one masthead light that we saw at half past eleven." [The previous night.]  
(US p.733)

The 4am steamer had two masthead lights, not one. It is further away than where the nearby stranger

had been stopped, and is not the earlier ship. Neither is it the *The Carpathia's* Captain testified that he did not see the *Californian*, rushing to assist, until 8am.

There is a difference in the bearing of the yellow-funnel ship, Stewart seeing her to the southward, and Lord mentioning southwest. He says she was to the "southward" in the 1914 article here. It may or may not be important. Stone, of course, says this ship was and "just abaft the port beam" when the *Californian*

One can only speculate as to the identity of this yellow-funnel vessel.

But she was apparently not the vessel previously seen by the *Californian*.

## Stewart

8851. What kind of a steamer was she (at 4am to southward)? &mdash; A four-masted steamer with one funnel.

8852. Have you been able to ascertain what her name was? &mdash; No.

8853. Stewart &mdash; Well, **we never knew** what ship that was, that we saw to the southward.

Chief Officer Stewart's use of "we" implies he and Lord, if not the entire ship's company.

Lord, who had also studied the yellow-funnel steamer by 4.30am, using glasses, later saw the on the other side of the icefield and drew no connection between them.

## Lord

Br. 6998. &mdash; I only saw one steamer, passenger steamer, of any size that day, and that was the *Mount Temple*.

6999. Is the result of your evidence that you cannot suggest the name of any other passenger steamer that was in the neighbourhood of your vessel at about midnight on the 14th April? &mdash; No, I cannot.

*Californian* later passed the at about 7.30am in the vicinity of the SOS position (Br. 7014/5). She was stopped. Neither Lord nor Stewart equated her with the earlier yellow funnel vessel.

There were more vessels in the immediate locality &mdash; and at an early stage &mdash; than is commonly imagined.

and

She was visible to *the Californian* at eight miles away at that time, and the saw no other ships at this time &mdash; certainly not the *Carpathia*

The *Californian*, therefore, was over the visible horizon from the red-funnel rescuing *Carpathia* and must have been at a considerable distance from her, even in the bright daylight.

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