

## Mount Temple Temp's Memories

by Senan Molony

### ***Titanic Research***

Thursday 8 October 2009



THE replacement Fourth Officer of the *Mount Temple* on her homeward voyage in April 1912 was a man named William Henry Baker.

*Californian* &hellip;

*Empress of Britain* at short notice to replace an officer of the *Mount Titanic* disaster.

Officer Baker was a highly accomplished man, married to a highly accomplished woman.

A majestic watercolourist of maritime scenes, he was also a photographer of some ability.

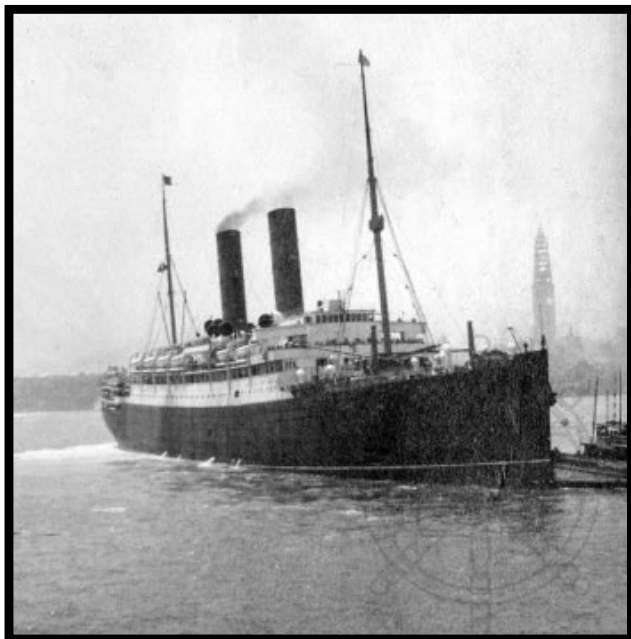
The full story of William Henry Baker is told in my new book "*Titanic Scandal: The Trial of the Mount Temple*", published by Amberley Books.

Here, with the kind permission of the copyright owner, a descendant, are a handful of the thousands of photographs Baker took &ndash; ones that *Encyclopedia Titanica* readers may find of interest.

The first is a shot of the RMS *Olympic*



The next is of the RMS *Empress of Britain* - from which Baker joined the - manoeuvring in the St Lawrence:



Another is a photograph of the Uranium Steamship Co's *Volturno*, burning in mid-ocean in 1913. The ship standing nearby is identified as the Cunarder *Carmania*.



Among those later on the scene was the Cunarder *Campania*, commanded by one Arthur H. Rostron.

*VOLTURNO*

The Cunard Company received the following Marconigram at 12.45 p.m. yesterday via Crookhaven wireless station from Commander Rostron, of the :- "2.15 p.m., October 12th. Steamed round *Volturno*, latitude 47.37 north, longitude 33.45 west going south-east, about one knot per hour [sic], smoking, but hull appears to be in good condition. Liable to float indefinitely. six hours later continued search, but did not see boats. There is no news from other steamers. High swell, north-west wind. All well."

Baker was aboard the Leyland Liner *Devonian* when he took a series of *Volturno*-related images, some of which are shown here.

*Devonian Titanic*



Other shots show Officer Knight of the *Devonian Volturno* &ndash; which steamer ultimately sank with the disastrous loss of 131 lives.



Captain Alfred William Vincent Trant of the *Devonian*

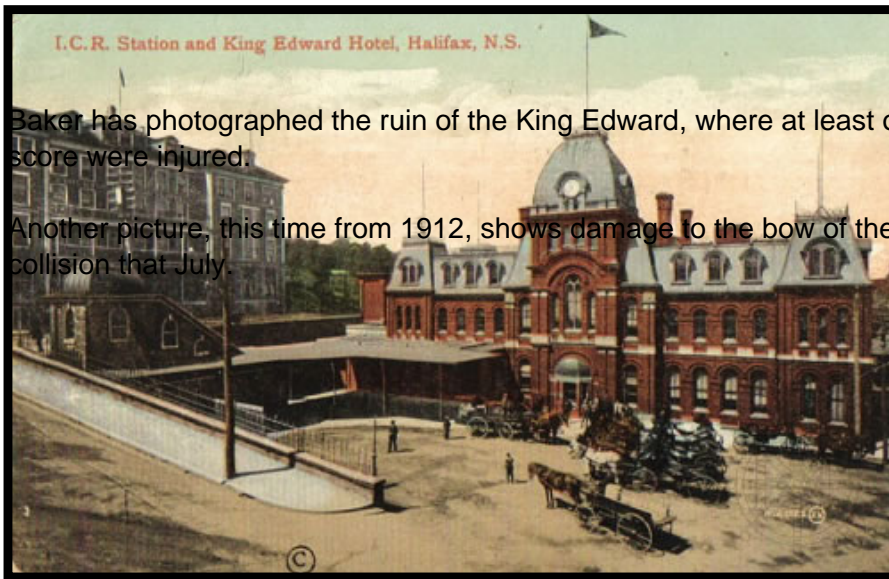


Two Officer Baker pictures shown hereafter are thought to be from the aftermath of the Halifax Explosion on December 6, 1917 — the largest man-made blast before Hiroshima.



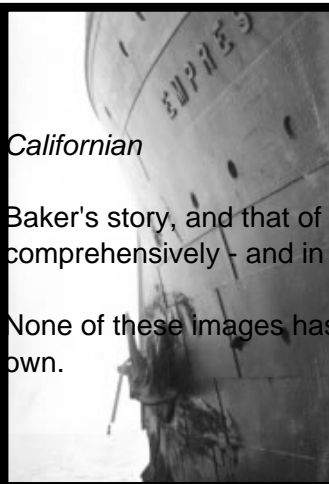
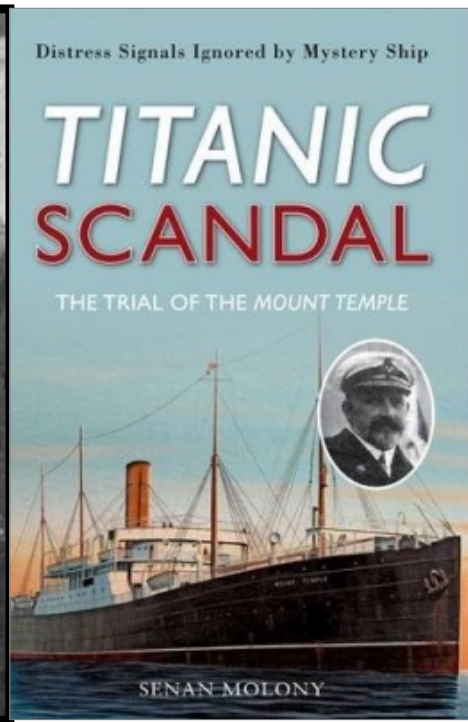
It occurred when the aggressively-departing *Imo* (formerly the White Star's *Runic*) collided with the explosive-packed *Mont Blanc*, which was heading slowly for the Bedford basin.

The blast destroyed the whole of the North End of Halifax, obliterating a train station at North Street and Hollis Street in front of the King Edward Hotel.



Baker has photographed the ruin of the King Edward, where at least one person died and more than a score were injured.

Another picture, this time from 1912, shows damage to the bow of the *Empress of Britain* after she was in collision that July.



Californian

Baker's story, and that of a great number of other individuals aboard the *Mount Temple*, is told comprehensively - and in more than 170 pictures - in ***Titanic Scandal: The Trial of the Mount Temple***.

None of these images has proved worthy of inclusion, but they nonetheless have a resonance all their own.

Courtesy of Senan Molony

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