

Sister of Plainfield Man Saved Little Boy

Monday 22 April 1912

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Wilson of Chestnut St. are home from New York where they had a meeting with Mr. Wilson's sister, Miss Helen Wilson, one of the survivors of the Titanic, who came in on the Carpathia. Miss Wilson is at the Hotel Seville, with Mr. and Mrs. F. O. Spedden, of Tuxedo Park, whose maid she has been for three years. The family is the only one that they know of whose members were all saved. Besides the parents and son, Douglas, there were the maid and nurse.

Miss Wilson is still very nervous and speaks of the wreck with horror. She saved the boy and when the lifeboat reached the Carpathia she was unconscious. She had nothing on but her night dress and a coat, but under the excitement did not feel the cold.

On reaching the Carpathia she was hauled up by a rope in an unconscious condition, and the little was put into a feed bag and hoisted aboard. He still held a little toy bear that he got in Egypt, and remarked, "Well, mother there is an awful lot of fuss going on here, ain't there?"

A few things that Miss Wilson said were:

"It was the most beautiful starlight night that I ever saw when struck the iceberg. This I noticed especially after the lights of the ship had all sunk below the water.

"I shall never forget the cries of anguish that went up from that ship as the life-boats pulled away. While we were being put into the boat there was a mad rush of some foreigners to get in, and two Italian men were shot dead before my eyes. The sight of floating bodies as we rowed away was horrible.

"Mr. Spedden was saved by what might be really called a leap for life. He had put his family into the boat which was lowered at once, and there were no more women in the immediate vicinity, so one of the officers seeing room for one more said to Mr. Spedden. 'You may as well jump and save yourself.' He did so and landed in the boat, thus joining his family.

"The water was almost to our knees in the boat. We pulled away toward a light which we thought was on a vessel, but after four hours we saw that it was only a star.

"We feared when the Carpathia came up that we should be swamped by the waves after all our troubles but we were saved.

"I will never forget the awful experiences of that night. I wish I could sleep and wake up to find it was only a dream, but it was too real.

Miss Wilson has travelled almost constantly with the Spedden family for the past four years, and has seen most of Europe, and a good part of Northern Africa. On this trip they were coming home from Egypt.

Courtesy of Arthur Merchant

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