

Ugborough Man's Story

Western Morning News

Monday 29 April 1912

J. Horswell (sic), a sailor, residing in Southampton, said though he was now lodging at Southampton, he hailed from Ugborough. He acted as bowman in one of the emergency boats, and among the passengers with them were Sir Cosmo and Lady Duff Gordon. He was told by Officer Murdock to get away with his boat, and he did so. For that reason their boat was not as full as it might have been.

Asked if he saw anything of the master, Horswell said he saw Captain Smith swimming about with the dead body of a child in his arms. When the boats were being manned some people even got out of them again, saying they were sure it was safer on the ship than it would be in the boats. When she sunk the liner broke in two between the third and fourth funnels. It was a good job the ship did not explode above the water, otherwise there would not be a quarter of them there to tell the tale. After the ship had gone down he heard four distinct explosions. He was an ex-service man, and had made thirty-two trips in the Oceanic before transferring to the Titanic. He hoped to go back to his old ship. - Asked if he heard the band playing, Horswell said he distinctly heard the music until the liner went under. He, too, heard the tune of "Nearer , my God, to Thee."

Note: Ugborough is a village in South Devon, a few miles from North Huish, the birthplace of both of Albert's parents and his eldest brother, Henry.

Albert's two elder sisters (Fanny & Clara) were both born in nearby Halwell before the family moved to West Ham, London in about 1870.

Courtesy of Steve Coombes

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