

A Night to Remember [Titanic] by Walter Lord (1955)

The Titanic rec'd 6 iceberg warnings on 14apr12, but ignored them. Travelling at 22.5 knots, the lookout reported he saw an iceberg ahead, but officer Murdoch ignored him. At 11:40pm they ran into it & caused a 300' gash into the double hull ship [& dropped tons of ice onto the deck]. Water tight doors were closed as the first 6 [of 16] watertight compartments flooded. The ship was designed to stay afloat with two compartments flooded & was considered unsinkable.

Officer Boxhall did a fast inspection & detected nothing. The president [Ismay] & the engineer [Andrews] of the ocean liner were on board for the maiden voyage. There was no general alarm & the crew constantly told passengers everything was fine. 3rd class passengers were prevented from going to the main decks. There were 16 wood lifeboats & 4 collapsible [only enough for half of the passengers].

Women & children were told to enter the lifeboats first, but in the confusion most of the boats were not full. Some felt safer on the ship & refused to go. 12:45 the first was launched & the quartermaster was the last to know when he saw a lifeboat in the water & called the bridge. Later crew had to use force to control the rush. 2:05 the last was launched.

The Marconi wireless operator was exhausted from all the frivolous traffic of personal messages sent [which had to be repeated from ship to ship before reaching shore] that he told the Californian to "shut up" when they tried to warn them about icebergs. The Californian [stopped for the night due to icebergs] was only 10 miles away, but shut down the wireless at 11:30pm. "CQD" [signal for distress] went out at 12:15 [later was the first to use the new "SOS"].

The Carpathia was 58 miles away & came at full speed, but it would take 4 hours. 12:45 Titanic sent up flares & used Morse lamp, but the Californian didn't respond. At 1:40 officer Wilde ordered everyone to the starboard side to try to offset the port slant. Those who jumped early were picked up in the lifeboats, but after the ship went down, they refused to go back [except Lowe in #14]. But it only saved 4 men [most would die after 15-30 minutes in 28-degree water]. At dawn he was the only one who used the sail on the lifeboat & saved those in collapsible A [now up to their knees in water].

2:15 the bridge went under water. The bow was going under so fast people could not stand on the decks as the stern went up in the air. She went under at 2:20 & the lights went out. 30 men swam to the upside-down collapsible B [it was losing air]. 651 were saved while 1500+ perished that night. The boats floated in a 5-mile area waiting to be rescued.

As dawn came, an officer on collapsible B blew his whistle for a life boat to come just as B was sinking. Carpathia starting sending up flares 30 minutes before they arrived & 4 am shut down her engines because they didn't see the Titanic. They had to look with binoculars to see the life boats & picked up the first. At 5:30 the Californian wireless operator was back on duty & found out what happened so they came. At 8:30 #12 was the last boat to reach Carpathia. They were given warm blankets & hot coffee; then taken to NYC [arriving 4/18 at 9:35pm]. One passenger

of the Carpathia was told his niece wanted to see him, but he knew they were on the Titanic [that's when he heard the news].

Because of the Titanic iceberg patrol began; 24-hour radio watch was required; enough lifeboats & life jackets [life belts didn't help much] for aboard; & ended the class distinction on boats. More percentage of first-class men survived than 3rd class children. One man was said to survive being in the water for hours because he drank whisky [hard to imagine]. Marconi stock went from 55 to 225.

Books: In 1898 Morgan Robertson wrote "Futility" [a novel very similar to what happened to the Titanic in 1912]. The Loss of the SS Titanic (Larry Beesley); Titanic & Other Ships (Lightoller);

Facts: The Titanic was 883' long with a 66,000-ton displacement & 55,000 hp. White Star Line owned Titanic.

Some of the people that died were Isidor Straus [Macy's], John Jacob Astor, Ben Guggenheim, Martin Rothschild, and many wealthy [income tax thinned out upper class].