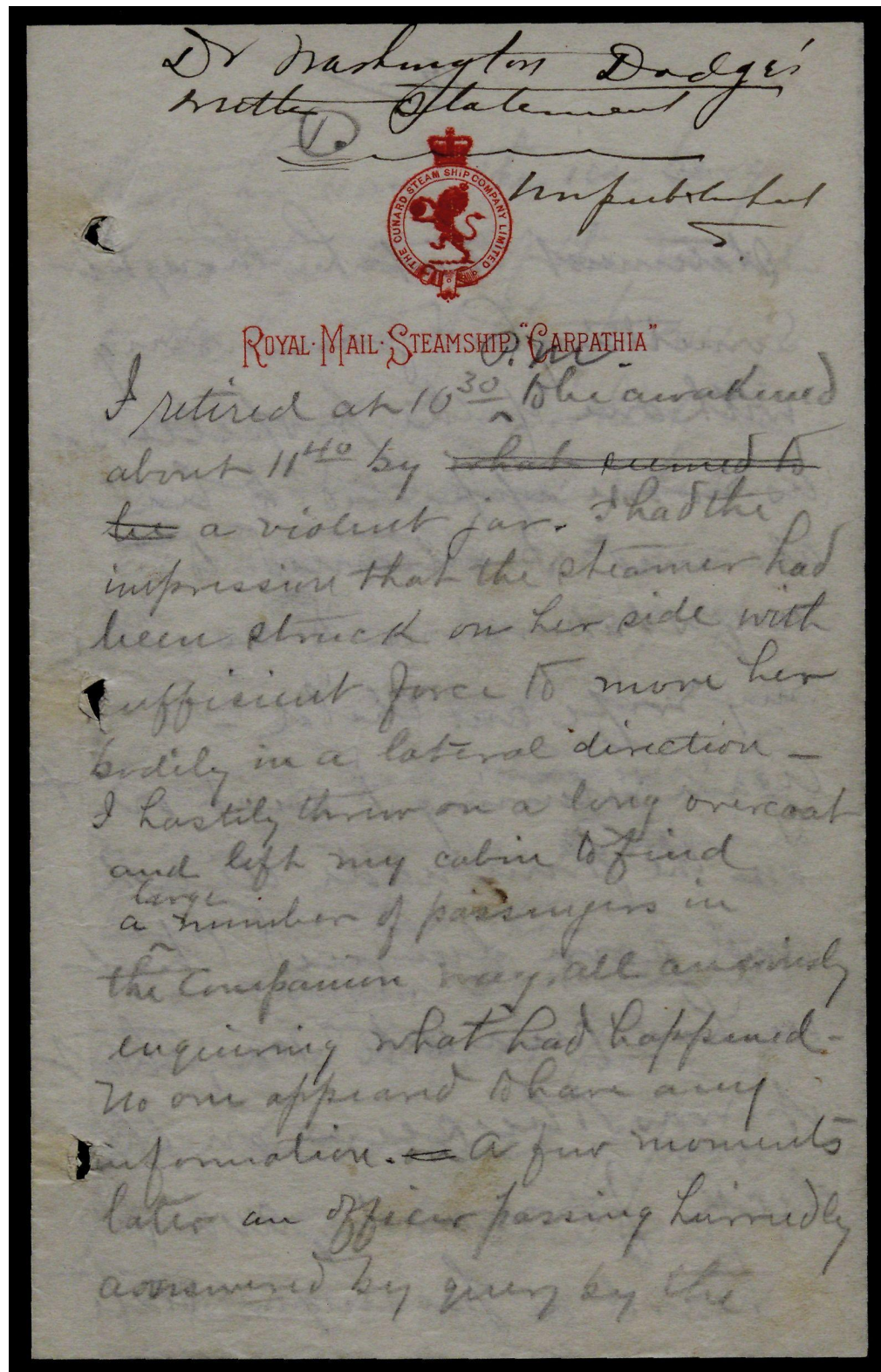


Image



Washington Dodge, Eyewitness Account of the Sinking of the *Titanic*, 1912.

(The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC07640 p1)

## Eyewitness Account of the Sinking of the *Titanic*, 1912

### Transcript

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[draft]

[in another hand] Dr Washington Dodge's  
written statement  
unpublished

I retired at 10<sup>30</sup> [inserted: P.M.] to be awakened about 11<sup>40</sup> by [struck: what seemed to be] a violent jar. I had the impression that the steamer had been struck on her side with sufficient force to move her bodily in a lateral direction – I hastily threw on a long overcoat and left my cabin to find a [inserted: large] number of passengers in the Companion way, all anxiously enquiring what had happened – No one appeared to have any information. [struck: on] A few moments later an officer passing hurriedly answered by giving by the [2] statement that he thought something had gone wrong with one of the propellers – As no one appeared to be alarmed I returned to my stateroom to assure my wife and child –

Again returning I went out on the promenade deck and soon learned that we had run into ice, that it was to be seen on the deck forward, and I heard a passenger state [3] that he saw the ice berg pass the stern of the vessel to the height of the promenade deck, on which he was walking, and which was about 70 feet above the water. Walking rapidly forward, I saw the ice on the deck, and returned to my stateroom [struck: I]. Having been told that there was no danger, and believing such to be the fact from the general conduct of passengers & such officers as I saw I insisted that [4] my family remain in bed and await developments – Once more returning to the companion way I asked our steward who was standing there what he had heard – He replied the order has just come down for all passengers to put on life preservers –

Rushing to my cabin I got my wife and 4 yr old son up and [5] [struck: without] allowing them to dress but partially, rushed them up on the boat deck which was just over our deck. Here I found a few gathered and the first boat on the starboard side no1, being loaded – As I [struck: adjust]† put on their life preservers which I had carried up over my arm the boat [6] boat was loaded – There was no very evident desire of those present to get off on this boat – and I could readily have placed my family aboard had I desired to do so without strapping on their life preservers – As the next boat no 3 was loaded I placed them aboard, and [7] stood back, while women and children were under command of an officer placed aboard. [struck: until] I watched this boat safely lowered to the water 70 or 80 ft below –

After this I watched [struck: all] [inserted: the] boats lowered on the starboard side being the odd numbers from 1 to 15 – A few were lowered to the deck below [inserted: (Deck A)] and there filled – [8] The officers in charge of loading the boats were cool and masterful, preventing as far as possible all [struck: disord] disorder and enforcing the command to [struck: load] [inserted: care for] women and children first. When boat 13 was lowered to A deck to be loaded I went to this deck – After 8 or 10 women had been placed aboard, no [struck: furt] other women or [9] children [struck: resp] were within hearing to respond to the officers call. A number of men then climbed over the rail into the boat, when some one pushed me from behind and shouted get in doctor. I climbed in and in a few moments the boat was filled & orders given [10] to lower – As we were lowered boat 15 which had been loaded from the boat deck, was also being lowered – By this we were for a

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few minutes placed in a perilous position – which threatened our destruction – We observed as we neared the [11] water that our boat was being lowered directly into the immense volume of water thrown out from the ships side by the condenser pump – On the *Titanic* this was a stream [struck: from 3-to 1] about 3 feet in diameter, which was thrown with great force 6 or 8 feet from the ship [struck: s]. It would instantly have swamped our boat – [12] To add to our anxiety boat 15 had swung directly over our heads owing to the fact that the steamer [struck: was] had settled several feet [inserted: into the water] at her bow – Both boats were being lowered when our loud cries of warning were heard above & the lowering of both boats arrested – [struck: As] We had no officer or seaman in our boat to [13] direct us but fortunately were able to disengage an oar, and with it [struck: we] push the bow of our boat, which overhung the threatening waters from the pump, 8 or 10 feet from the ships side when releasing the trigger we dropped into the water & were at once [14] swept away from the steamers side by great force of [inserted: the] water – The ocean being as calm as the waters of a smooth flowing river we rowed off to overtake a boat having a lantern aboard, we being unable to [15] find one in our boat – [struck: At the] Having rowed about 1/4 mile we found ourselves in close proximity to five boats – We observed the closing incidents the gradual submergence of the ship forward – The final extinguishment suddenly of all her lights – The final plunge downward – [inserted: as a shooting star fell from the Zenith visible nearly to the horizon –] From this time until shortly after 4 in a sea gradually growing rougher & [struck: in a] [inserted: with] a temperature [struck: of] extremely cold [16] we rowed about –

Observing in the darkness what first appeared to be a ship full rigged, but to our disappointment proved to be an ice berg [struck 1/3] about 1/2 mile distant – About day break we observed a light which appeared to be [struck: a] redder than those about us carried by several life boats – & this soon appeared above a second light which became visible [17] confirming our [struck: hopes] belief that help was approaching. We reached this Steamer [inserted: in] after about 3/4 of an hour and found her taking aboard the occupants of 3 boats that had reached her ahead of us – On boarding her I found my wife & son, who were in the second boat [struck: to] load received – [18] Later I ascertained that only 3 men amongst the first class passengers whose wives [struck: we] left the steamer before them reached the “*Carpathia*.” – Mr Carter of Phil – Mr Stengel of Newark & myself. – The number of women [struck: left] on the *Carpathia* whose husbands father<sup>s</sup> or brother<sup>s</sup> were missing must have been over 50 – [19] These men all stood back while women or children were [struck: to] being rescued & went to their graves – One lad of 10 Master Carter told me that after his mother & sister were in a boat he was refused permission, [inserted: to enter it] and Col Astor who was standing by & who knew the lad a moment later picked up a girls hat & placing it on [struck: his hea] the lads head [20] lifted him up & said to the officer as he was lowering the boat let this little girl go with her mother – As the lad expressed it “they did not stop to examine me so I got with mother” –

Washington Dodge