



The Story of the Titanic As Told by Its Survivors (Dover Maritime)

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Why does the sinking of the *Titanic* hold such fascination for us? Many reasons have been advanced for the continuing fascination of this epic tragedy, but none, we think, can contribute as much to an understanding of it as the four accounts collected in this volume.

All four authors were survivors, and each presents the catastrophe from his own viewpoint; the icy waters, the cries of the drowning, the confusion, and the heroism, are given an intensely personal immediacy.

This volume contains, complete and unabridged, "The Loss of the S.S. Titanic," by Lawrence Beesley, and "The Truth about the Titanic," by Col. Archibald Gracie. Both are full-length books published soon after the disaster. Each has become extremely rare today. The third story in this volume, "Titanic," was written by one of the only officers to survive the catastrophe, Commander Lightoller. It includes the story of the "white-washing" inquiries into the *Titanic's* safety measures. The last section is a dramatic tale by the *Titanic's* surviving wireless operator, Harold Bride.

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Editorial Review

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This invaluable book collects some of the first-published first-person accounts of the tragedy, described in old-fashioned prose and enhanced by photographs and illustrations redolent of Edwardian society, with captions such as "Ladies and gentlemen in riding habit exercised on mechanical horses and camels in the ship's gymnasium." Some of the social attitudes of the day are preserved to often startling effect: the habits of obedience of "the Teutonic race" are repeatedly praised, and one brave *Titanic* officer used what the book's introduction terms "the strange ethical algebra which decided that one female, travelling first class, deserved life some six times as much as one male, travelling third class." Yet it's just such period detail that makes this book so compelling--not to mention the vivid sense that the passengers just didn't get it, even while disaster was upon them. "To illustrate further how little danger was apprehended," writes survivor Lawrence Beesley, "when it was discovered ... that the forward lower deck was covered with small ice, snowballing matches were arranged for the following morning.... The cries of drowning people after the *Titanic* gave the final plunge were a thunderbolt to us."

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