

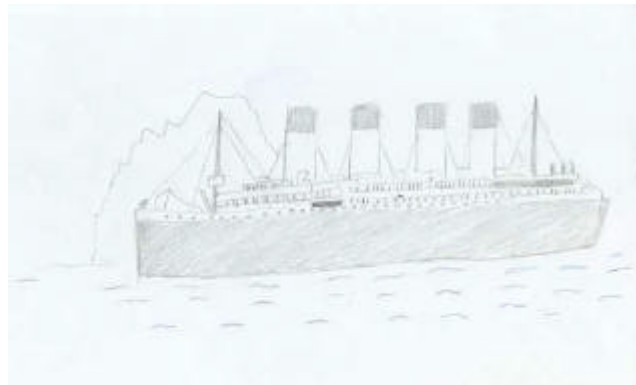
# Family History Indexes

**Titanic People**

Craig Stringer

# Titanic People

## 1912



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# Introduction

This work tells the tales of over 2,200 men, women and children, who became part of history simply by stepping on board an ocean steamer, bound for a routine crossing of the Atlantic ninety years ago. They had not the slightest notion that they were going to be the participants in what was to be the world's worst maritime disaster, claiming the lives of over 1,500. Nor were they aware that almost a century later their lives would be scrutinised so closely by people who never met or knew them.

I began writing this work two years ago, after being approached at a talk I was giving about the Titanic and her passengers. Since then, other people have made similar suggestions to me, proving that, ninety years on, the appeal of the Titanic is as strong as ever. The offer came at a time when I, as a Titanic researcher, was feeling quite despondent with the 'Titanic world'. James Cameron's film had not just awoken interest in the story of the lost ship, but catapulted it and her people to the forefront of people's minds. While this was a good thing, revealing many previously untold stories about the sinking, it also gave every piece of information a price. Something had been lost that has only recently begun to reappear: a sharing. It seemed that in the wake of the film people wanted their five minutes of fame and in some cases would take the hard-earned efforts of others and use them as their own. Thankfully, I am glad to say that the Titanic is a calmer world today, and the books, articles and internet sites are alive with mutual co-operation, a co-operation that is seeing the story of the ship more thoroughly investigated than ever before.

This work does not intend to retell the story of the ship, from the laying of its keel, to its final plunge on April 15<sup>th</sup> 1912. Rather, I would like to remember those people who travelled on board the Titanic and who shared her brief life. Each passenger and crew member is remembered through a short biography, and here, for the first time I believe, are the stories of the cross-channel passengers, people who did not complete the full voyage, but disembarked at Cherbourg or Queenstown. Where passengers were travelling together, they have been written about together, to avoid, where possible, needless repetition. The results are based on sixteen years of research, which has taken me to places I would never have imagined.

For those readers who are unfamiliar with the story, I include here, a short synopsis. The Titanic, owned by the White Star Line, set sail on her maiden voyage on April 10<sup>th</sup> 1912. That year had seen Britain paralysed by a coal strike, and many ships lay idle around the country for want of coal. Many of the passengers making the maiden voyage had been transferred from other steamers affected by the strike. The ship left her mooring in Southampton at noon, but even before she had steamed her first mile, she had avoided a mishap. The suction caused by the new vessel caused the steamer New York, to break free of her mooring and swing toward the Titanic. An accident was narrowly avoided, but there were some witnesses who saw the near miss as an ill omen. The size of the Titanic, which was a marvel to some, was a worry to others. In September 1911, the Olympic, Titanic's sister ship was involved in a collision in the Solent,

when the suction of the vessel caused the naval cruiser, HMS Hawke, to be drawn into the side of the larger ship. Many of the crew on the Titanic had previously served on the Olympic, and no doubt were reminded of the accident on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

After a brief delay, the Titanic continued her voyage, sailing to Cherbourg, France, to pick up more passengers, and then travelling overnight to pick up people in Queenstown, Ireland. Then she left land behind, expecting to arrive in New York on early Wednesday morning, April 17<sup>th</sup>.

For many of the 2,200 people on board the maiden voyage was a welcome break from daily life. The ship was beautifully appointed, with accommodations in all classes of a high standard. Titanic's passengers could travel either first, second or third class, depending on their ability to pay. At the other end of the scale, the ship needed a crew of nine hundred to move her across the Atlantic, many of them there simply to serve the passengers.

Sunday April 14<sup>th</sup> passed quietly. There was a divine service to break the routine of socialising, eating, walking the decks, writing and reading. Many people commented on how much colder the weather had become, and there was talk of ice. But the Titanic was unsinkable, everyone said so, and could knock a dozen icebergs out of the way and remain undamaged. That was not to be the case. At 11.40p.m. the lookouts spotted an object in the water ahead. Despite evasive action, the berg struck the new steamer along her starboard side, opening seams and popping rivets. Tiny damage to such a mammoth construction, but fatal all the same.

It soon became clear that the Titanic was sinking, and plans were put into place to have the ship evacuated. The Titanic carried twenty lifeboats, more than enough to meet regulations, but not enough for all on board. As the crew began to fill them the order 'women and children first' was used, followed more strictly on the port side, but on the starboard side men were allowed into the boats where there was room. Stories exist of third class passengers being kept below decks, to allow first and second class passengers access to the boats. But even if this is untrue then the lowest berthed passengers had the hardest time navigating the maze of corridors that would lead them to safety. Then, there was the belief that the ship was unsinkable, which lulled many into remaining on board until too late. When the Titanic took her final plunge more than 1,500 men, women and children remained on the ship, while nearby floated eighteen partly filled lifeboats. As the lights aboard the vessel failed, the strains of the orchestra could be heard across the calm ocean.

With the great ship gone, the air was filled with the cries of those struggling for life in the icy water. Only two boats returned to the scene, while a third was near enough to pull a passenger from the water. The rest kept their distance, stilled by a louder objection, after someone had made a tentative suggestion that they go back. Gradually the cries died out, and those in the boats were left with silence, silence and the bitter cold.

At dawn on April 15<sup>th</sup> the Carpathia, bound for the Mediterranean when it received the Titanic's distress call, arrived to pick up survivors. Just 705 living were taken from the boats. The Carpathia brought the survivors to New York, but already another ship was converging on the wreck scene. The Mackay-Bennett, a cable ship from Halifax, Nova Scotia, had been given the task of retrieving the Titanic's dead from the sea.

And at that point the tale gradually peters out. The survivors began to pick up the threads of their lives, while the dead were committed to the deep, or brought back to land for burial. Claims and counter claims were made, inquiries begun, conceiving an interest in the ship and her people that, although it has flickered and wavered like a candle flame, burns as strongly in 2002 as it did in 1912.

I came to this project, initially, as my way of saying goodbye to an interest that had filled my life for nearly sixteen years. I was happy, two years ago, to walk away from the ship and her people, but now, at the end, I feel differently. I hope that this work adds something to the story of the Titanic and her sinking, and will enable whoever reads it, to go on and make their own discoveries. In the meantime, writing this has proved one thing more than any other. That I, like everyone else involved in research, only knows part of the story, and that there is still much more to learn.

Happy Hunting.

Craig Stringer

April 12<sup>th</sup> 2002

# Acknowledgements

No work of this size could have been undertaken by one person alone, and I am indebted to the support of many people. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to them all. I know that if I attempted to list them all, I would certainly miss someone out, and I realise that a blanket thank you is not ideal. I consider myself fortunate to be part of the 'Titanic world', and would like to recognise the work of the many people who share my passion and interest, and who share their finds with other like-minded souls. Thank you all.

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I should like to acknowledge the work of the many librarians and archivists, without which many of the details in this book would not appear. They are people who rarely seem to get thanks, but individuals without whom we as researchers could not manage.

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Craig Stringer

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# First Class Passengers

## Mr and Mrs Thomas Dyer Edwardes

Though not strictly passengers on the Titanic for her full, if interrupted, voyage, Thomas Dyer Edwardes and his wife did sail on the maiden voyage, and were the parents of another passenger, who later survived the sinking. The Edwardes' are part of a group of thirty passengers who sailed cross-channel on the Titanic, either from Southampton to Cherbourg, or from Southampton to Queenstown.

Thomas Dyer Edwardes was born on Finchley Road, London, Middlesex, on February 21<sup>st</sup> 1847, the only son of Thomas Dyer Edwardes, and his wife, Martha, nee Sharp. He was brother to Mary Dyer, Elizabeth Sarah and Sophia Anne. Thomas was educated at Rugby School and Clare College, Cambridge, where he rowed, leaving him after with a slightly hunched back. In his early life he spent time in Melbourne, Australia, and in later life donated the bells to St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, in memory of his father, who had been a landowner in the region.

On January 10<sup>th</sup> 1878, Thomas married eighteen year old Clementina Georgina Lucy Drummond Villiers at St. Mary Abbots Church, Kensington. Clementina, born 1859, was the daughter of the late Lieutenant James Villiers and his wife, Lady Lucy Elizabeth Drummond Davies, the niece of George Drummond, the sixth Duke of Melfort. Clementina's father died when she was just a young girl, and on August 10<sup>th</sup> 1865, Lucy Villiers married John Sale Barker, of Cadogan Place, London. By her second husband, Lucy raised another family, including Lillian and Horatio.

Thomas Edwardes once said that he and Clementina had met in church. It was a case of love at first sight, and Thomas had sought quickly to learn who Clementina was, and to gain an introduction. The couple had one daughter, Lucy-Noel Martha, born on Christmas Day 1878.

On the 1881 census Thomas and his family were living at 15, Kensington Square, London, but also had a home at Park Crescent, Worthing, Sussex, which was occupied by Thomas' sisters, Elizabeth and Sophia, in 1881. Thomas was living off investments. The family moved in the highest social circles. In 1885, following the death of his father, Thomas inherited 5, Hyde Park Gate, Kensington, where the family were still living in 1912. Another home was purchased in 1888, that of Prinknash Abbey in Gloucestershire. Thomas became High Sheriff of Gloucestershire in 1895.

Thomas and Clementina saw their daughter married on April 19<sup>th</sup> 1900, when Lucy became the wife of Norman Evelyn Leslie, the Earl of Rothes. Shortly after, Thomas purchased the house of Charmandean, in Broadwater, near Worthing. By 1912 the Edwardes' were the grandparents to two boys, Malcolm George and John Wayland Leslie. John remembered his grandfather as

'rather short in height, with broad shoulders, and a slim figure.' His hair by then was grey, but had once been thick, and black and curly. One of his greatest loves was music.

In April 1912 Thomas and Clementina made plans to travel to their French chateau at Caudebec-en-Caux, Normandy. They booked first class cross-channel ticket number 87, costing £3 on the Titanic. Part of their decision to do this seems to have been a desire to travel with their daughter, Lucy, who was taking the Titanic to New York in order to meet her husband. The Edwardes' left the Titanic at Cherbourg, leaving Lucy, her husband's cousin, Gladys Cherry, and Lucy's maid to complete the journey. Thankfully all three ladies survived the subsequent sinking.

Thomas Dyer Edwardes continued to live at Prinknash Park after 1912, but continued to travel as he had always enjoyed. He made several changes to Prinknash Park, including the addition of a chapel. Mr Edwardes was known for his generosity to charitable causes, and gave to projects in Worthing and Gloucestershire. During the First World War he gave his home in Nice to the forces to use as a military hospital.

In 1924 Thomas became a Catholic, and invited a Benedictine order to make a foundation at Prinknash. Plans were set in motion, and in the winter of 1926 Thomas travelled to the Vatican City to meet the Pope, Pius XI. While in Rome, Thomas contracted influenza. He began his journey home, travelling as far as Naples, but there suffered a heart attack and died in his sleep, on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1926. Thomas' funeral took place at Prinknash on March 6<sup>th</sup> 1926, his body being interred in the vault Thomas had had built for himself. He left an estate of £165,848 18s 1d, in addition to homes in France, Sussex, London and Gloucestershire.

His widow, and grandson, saw through Thomas's plans that Prinknash be given to the monks, and this took place in 1927. Clementina Edwardes survived her husband by a further twenty-one years, dying in Painswick, Gloucestershire, on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1947. Her estate of £10, 896 7s 4d was left to her daughter, Lucy.

## Second Class Passengers

### Miss Lucy Ridsdale

Lucy Ridsdale was travelling to join her sister at 1117, Third Street, Marietta, Ohio, having lived for the last fifty-eight years in England. Lucy had been born in the tiny Yorkshire village of Little Ribston on March 20<sup>th</sup> 1854, the daughter of, stone mason James Ridsdale and his wife Mary, nee Theakstone. She had three sisters, Mary, Martha and Ann, and two brothers, Samuel and her twin, Robert. Lucy was born with a clubfoot, but throughout her life does not seem to have been handicapped by it.

By 1871 Lucy had left her family behind, and started work, probably as a domestic servant. By 1881 she had travelled as far as Lewisham, Kent, where she was working as a private nurse to the Hammond family.

By 1912, Lucy had decided to join her three sisters in America. It was not her first visit to the States. Miss Ridsdale had first visited her relatives in 1902, and had paid a second visit to Milwaukee, in 1906, arriving on the Baltic from Liverpool on December 14<sup>th</sup>. At the time the authorities recorded that Lucy was 5'6" tall, with grey hair and brown eyes. For some years Lucy had run a nursing home in London, living at 3, Quebec Street, but had given this up to emigrate, intending to spend her last years with her sisters. Lucy paid £10 10s for her ticket, which was not originally for the Titanic. However, a paralysing coal strike gripped Britain during the early months of 1912, and many ships had voyages cancelled. Lucy found herself travelling second class on the new Titanic.

Lucy shared a room on the ship with Miss Mary Davis, who seeing her clubfoot vacated the lower berth in their cabin for Lucy. Lucy was nervous. She was travelling with all her possessions stored in the ship's hold. She worried how they would withstand the journey.

When the Titanic struck the iceberg the ladies were alerted to the danger by the steward banging on their cabin door. Mary assisted Lucy in dressing, and the ladies hurried on deck. Once there they realised how cold it was. Mary returned to the cabin for blankets, and Lucy's heavy red coat. Both ladies were assisted into lifeboat number 13, one of the heaviest laden of the departing lifeboats.

From the rescue ship Lucy despatched several wireless messages informing family on both sides of the Atlantic of her survival. She arrived in New York on April 19<sup>th</sup>, where immigration records recorded her as being 5'4" tall, with grey hair.

Lucy, in a state of severe shock, was assisted in New York, by several charities, including the Red Cross. She was given \$1,350, to help her until such times as she could work again. Lucy travelled to her sister in Marietta, and from there made a claim of \$3,140 for losses sustained in the wreck. She remained in America for the rest of her life, dying in Chicago on January 11<sup>th</sup> 1947.

# Third Class Passengers

## Mr Alfonzo Meo-Martino

Born in Potzena, Italy, Alfonzo Meo-Martino was 48 years old, and had been living in England for some years. He was married to English born, Emily Jane Innes, and the couple had several children, including a daughter.

Alfonzo was a maker of musical instruments, and owned a violin making business in Bournemouth, Dorset, England. His address in 1912 was 95, Old Christchurch Road. Meo was well known in Bournemouth for his musical talents.

In April 1912 Alfonzo Meo-Martino was on his way to America to deliver a violin to a customer in Washington. He boarded the Titanic at Southampton on third class ticket 11206, costing £8. 1s. Od, and was listed as Alfonso Meo. It was not unusual for his daughter to accompany him on his trips, but this time she remained in Bournemouth.

Alfonzo Meo-Martino died in the sinking of the Titanic. His body was one of those identified during the recovery of bodies from the wreck site afterwards. The details recorded were;

NO.201. MALE. ESTIMATED AGE, 55. DARK HAIR AND MOUSTACHE.

CLOTHING – Blue serge suit.

EFFECTS – Silver chain; \$3.00; silver watch; ladies gold watch; snuff box; silver match box; silver fob; 8 rings; sleeve links; gold stud; pocketbook; £15. 10s gold; \$5.00 gold; 3s. 6d.; Union badge; pince-nez; pencil case.

THIRD CLASS TICKET No. 11206.

NAME – ALPHONSO MEO.

Alfonzo's body was brought to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, where it was interred at Fairview Cemetery on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1912.

Emily Meo-Martino made a claim against the White Star Line for \$1459.95 for the loss of her husband. She also received the settlement from her husband's estate of £34.

## Mr Aaron Willer

## Mr Usher Pullnor

Russian born Aaron Willer had been living in London and Paris prior to sailing on the Titanic. He was 37 years old, a tailor. Aaron was the husband of Bessie, and the couple had five children, Gabriel, Goodman, David, Maurice and a daughter, aged between 16 and 3 ½.

Aaron Willer had been living at 1330, South Halstead Street, Chicago, but his business had not been successful, and he had moved to London, where he had lived for six years previously. From London he sent Bessie regular amounts to support his growing family, and by 1912, felt he had done enough to return to America, and establish a business again.

Willer, listed as Abi Weller, boarded the Titanic at Cherbourg, carrying with him \$200 in cash, the amount he hoped would start him over in America. He boarded the ship in the company of Usher Pullnor, listed as Baulmer Usher. Usher was a 16 year old Russian lad, travelling to his brother in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He had been living in Paris, prior to sailing. The two travelled third class, Willer on ticket 3410, and Pullnor on ticket 3411. Both tickets cost £8. 14s. 3d.

Aaron Willer and Usher Pullnor both died in the sinking of the Titanic, but their bodies were not among those identified during the recovery of victims from the wreck site.

Bessie Willer, with the loss of her husband, found herself in financial straits. Though her daughter, aged 16, was at work, earning \$6 a week, this was insufficient for the family's needs. Unable to pay mounting debts she was threatened with eviction and seizure of furniture. The Red Cross came to the family's assistance providing \$260 through the Charity Organization Society to pay off immediate debts. A further \$3,000 was placed in trust to provide the widow and children with a monthly pension. Other charitable groups provided the family with an additional \$2,500.

Claims were made by the estates of both men against the White Star Line for their deaths. The claim for Aaron Willer was put at \$60,000, which included \$10,000 for lost property. \$25,000 was claimed against the life of Usher Pullnor. In addition, Pullnor's mother was awarded a grant of £130 by the British Titanic Relief Fund.

# Crew

## First Class Stewardesses

### Mrs Catherine Gold



Mrs Catherine Cook was born in Woolwich, Kent in 1869. By 1881 she was living in Burton on Trent, Staffordshire, with the family of Benjamin Cook or Cork, who it would appear was a cousin. By that time Catherine, an apprentice dressmaker, was known as Kate, the name she used on the Titanic. Other members of Kate's family settled in the Burton area, including her sister, Mrs Windmill, and her brother. Kate however, moved on from Burton, arriving in Liverpool, where she entered the service of the White Star Line. At around the same time she married Mr J. Gold, who died at the turn of the century.

As a stewardess Kate Gold worked on many White Star ships, including the Teutonic, the Seuvic, Adriatic and Olympic. She was aboard the Seuvic when it ran aground off the Lizard Peninsula in 1907, and was on board the Olympic when it collided with the naval cruiser Hawke in 1911.

By 1912 Kate Gold was living in Southampton. She signed on the Titanic on April 10<sup>th</sup> 1912, as a first class stewardess. Her monthly wages would be £3 10s 0d. Kate was assigned cabins on B deck, and was once again working with her friend, Annie Martin, with whom she had served on the Olympic and Adriatic. Among the passengers they would wait on were Mrs James Baxter,

and her daughter, Mrs F. C. Douglas; and Mrs William Carter. Travelling with the Carter's were the family's two dogs. Each morning the dogs would come to the stewardess cabin to see them.

At just before midnight on April 14<sup>th</sup>, Kate Gold was woken by a steward, who advised her to get up. At first she thought the man was joking, but he insisted. Hastily Kate and Annie Martin began to dress. Leaving their cabin they went to their passengers, and assisted them to dress and put on their lifebelts. Just after one o'clock Kate and Annie returned to their cabin to dress more thoroughly. Thomas Andrews, the Titanic's designer found them and told them to hurry. Both ladies arrived to find the last boats being made ready. They and several other stewardesses were assisted into lifeboat number 11. Kate Gold found the boat crowded, with many children in it, and two German men, one of whom kept counting his money. Through the night Kate cared for a woman who had left her husband behind and could not stop crying.

Once rescued Kate found herself criticised by surviving passengers, who felt she had no right to be saved, because she was one of the crew. Others felt she should be put to work on the rescue ship. After arriving in New York, Kate Gold and Annie Martin returned to England on the Lapland. While being detained by the British authorities, in order to take her statement, Kate spoke to a reporter for the Daily Mirror. She signed off the ship's articles on April 30<sup>th</sup> 1912. Her wages for her voyage were just 14 shillings, payment up to the moment the Titanic sank.