

The Longford passengers who were lost

Denis Lennon (aged 20),
Curra Creehan, Moydow

Denis was a son of William and Bridget Lennon. For many years, there was confusion arising from the fact that his name appeared as 'Lemon' on reconstructed Titanic passenger lists and it was also associated with that of a Mary Lennon or 'Lemon'. In fact, Mary was using his name because they were eloping. Denis worked as an assistant in the shop and public house owned by the Mullin family of Clarinbridge, Co. Galway. He fell in love with a daughter of the family, named Mary, and they agreed to run away together. Some survivors later reported seeing a couple of their description and the woman had refused to leave the man to take either a lifebelt or a lifeboat on her own.

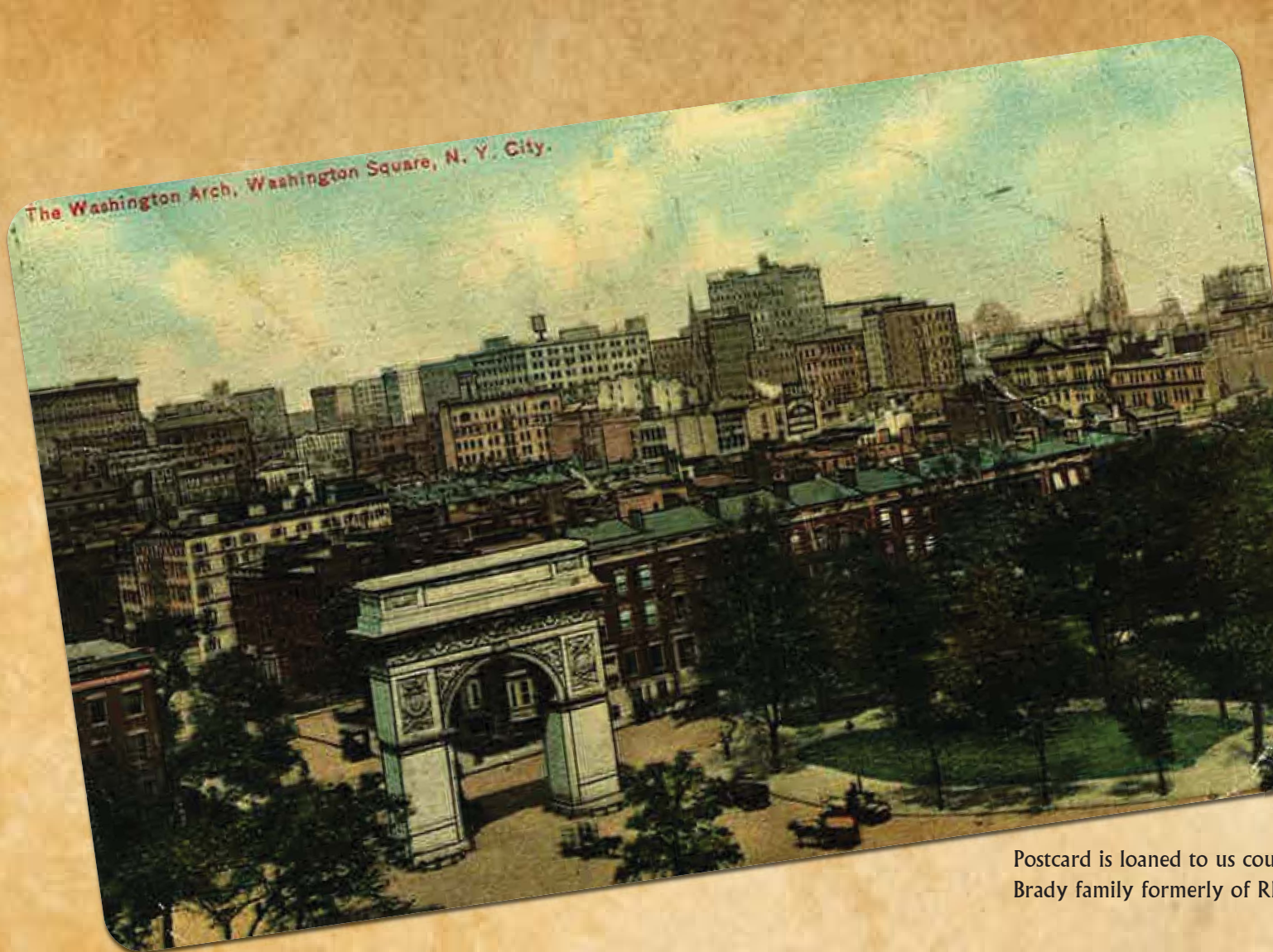


David Charters

David Charters (aged 21),
Garvagh, Ballinalree

David was the eldest of the family of William and Marianne Charters. He was going to New York to join his uncle, David Vance. Originally he intended to travel a month earlier, but he had postponed his trip. Prior to travelling, David wanted to show his family the size of the Titanic so he walked from his front door to the top of a ridge in front of the house, which was the approximate length of the ship.

Two of David's brothers, Richard and Alexander, later emigrated to the U.S.A.



Postcard is loaned to us courtesy of Mary Farrell and the Brady family formerly of Rhyne Lane, Killoe.

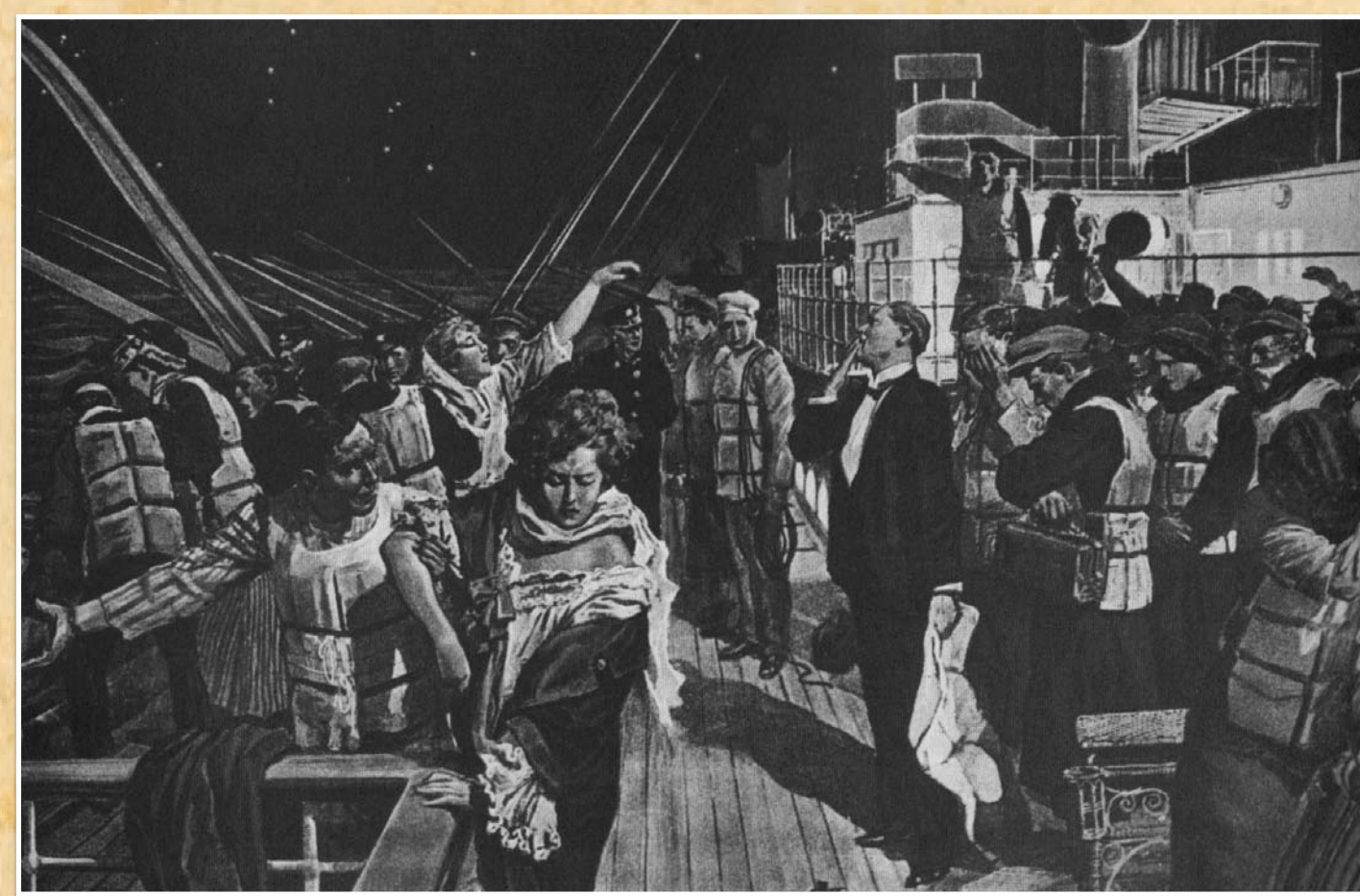
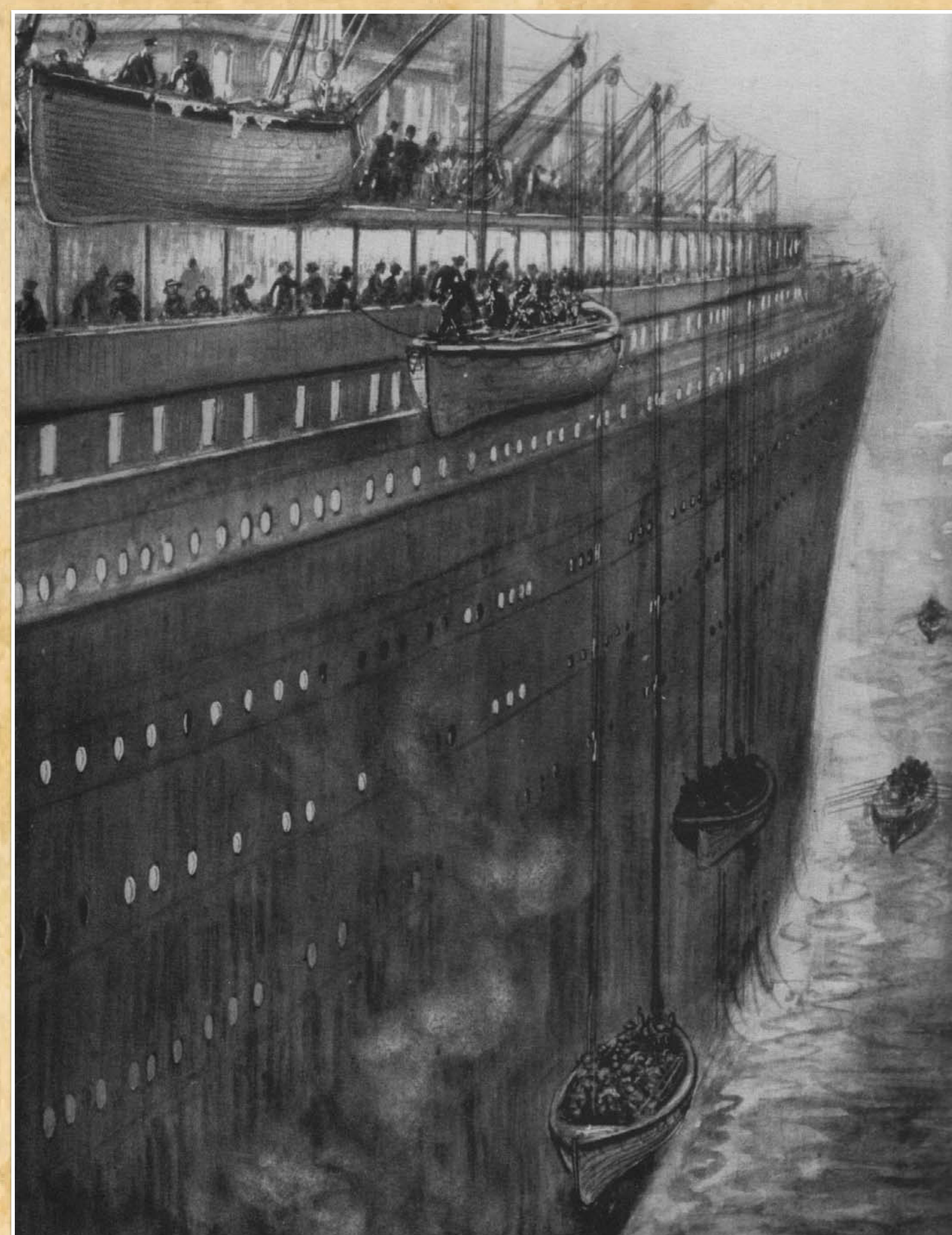


LONGFORD PASSENGERS - 'GOOD-BYE FOREVER'

Emigration was a necessity for many Longford people from the years of the Great Famine (1845-'50) onwards. In 1912, 426 people left the county from a population of 43,820, according to the 1911 census. What is much more striking is that in the sixty years from 1851 to 1911, a total of 61,412 people had emigrated from County Longford.

There were fourteen Longford passengers on the Titanic. While this group is small, it illustrates some persistent features of Irish emigration over many decades: all fourteen were single and under thirty years old; and there was a web of connections – family and neighbourhood – involving many of them. Sadly, five perished.

All of the Longford passengers were 3rd class or steerage, which placed them at a disadvantage in an emergency situation such as that which developed on the night of 14-15 April 1912. There were many stories recounted of attempts to keep 3rd class passengers in their quarters and of crew members resorting to violence to prevent passengers from trying to access lifeboats. Some of the Longford people described such happenings, and also some of the acts of heroism that took place on that terrible night.



Famous Titanic passengers

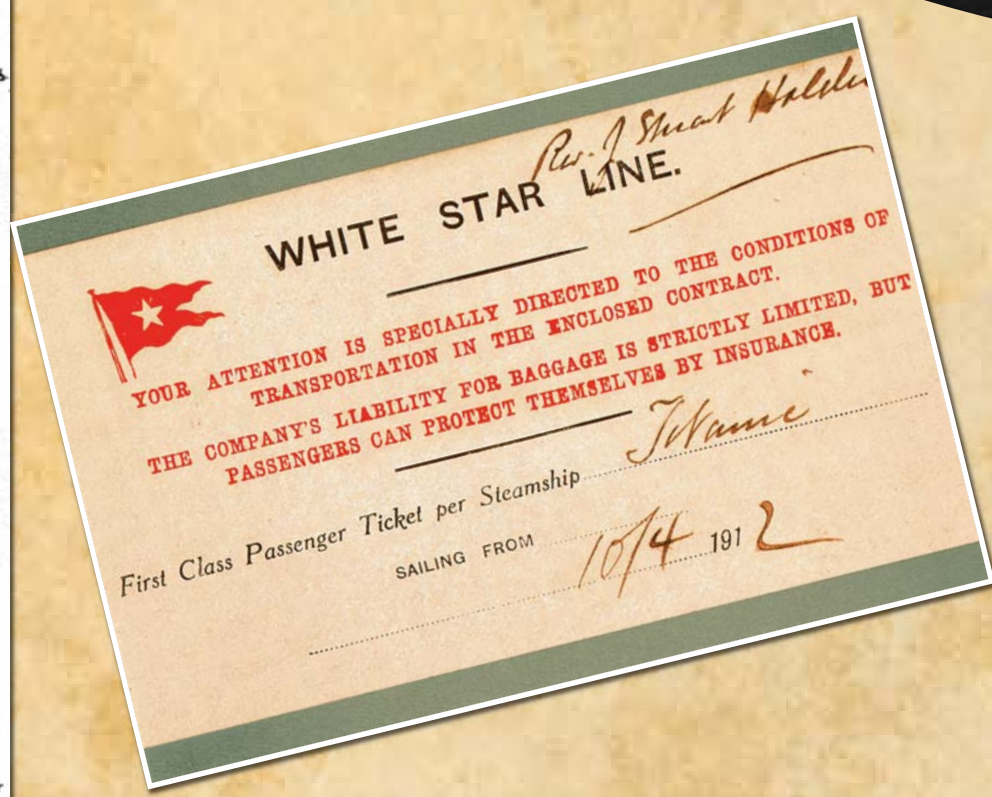
J. Bruce Ismay

Ismay was the chairman of White Star Line. He survived the sinking and was heavily criticised by some on the assumption that he had used his position to secure a place on a lifeboat. He did help some passengers into lifeboats. Ismay later retired to Connemara and died in 1937.



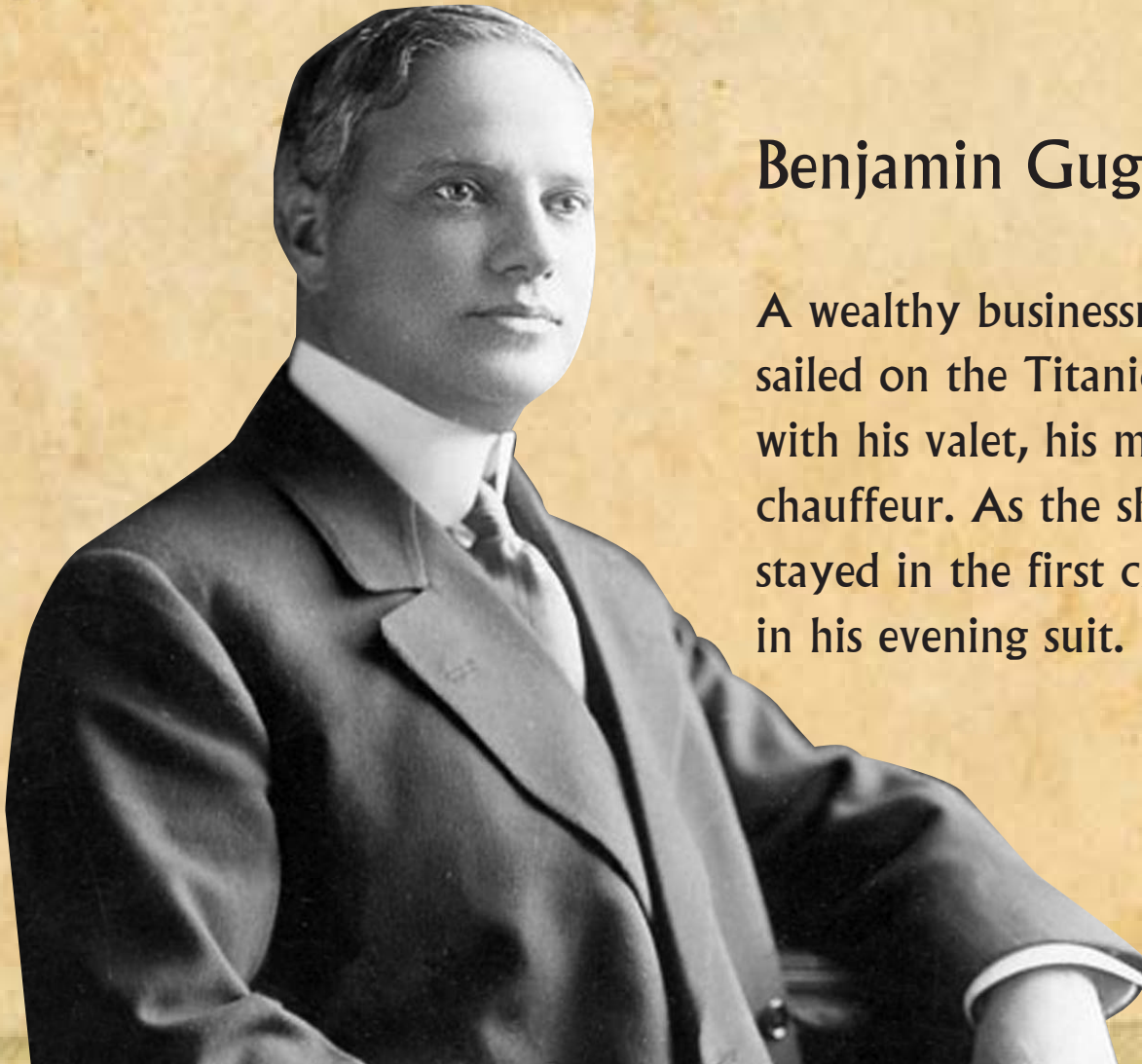
Thomas Andrews

Andrews was the designer of the Titanic and a younger brother of John M. Andrews, future prime minister of Northern Ireland. He assisted passengers in putting on lifejackets and boarding lifeboats, and was spoken of by some survivors as a hero.



Benjamin Guggenheim

A wealthy businessman, Guggenheim sailed on the Titanic from Cherbourg with his valet, his mistress and his chauffeur. As the ship was sinking, he stayed in the first class saloon, dressed in his evening suit.



John Jacob and Madeleine Astor

Astor, a millionaire, had recently married and taken his wife on an extended honeymoon. Madeleine, aged just 18, became pregnant on the trip and they boarded the Titanic at Cherbourg to return to New York, where they wished their child to be born. John Jacob died, while Madeleine survived.



The Longford passengers who were lost

James Farrell (aged 26),
Clonee, Killoe

James was the third of seven children born to John and Ellen Farrell, Clonee. The family lived on a small farm. James purchased a ticket possibly in Mulligan's agency in Aghnaccliffe and boarded the ill-fated Titanic at Queenstown. His destination was New York City but he never made it. He is one of the heroes of the Titanic saga. When alerted of the danger James showed great bravery in helping to save other passengers including neighbours from home, Katie Gilnagh, Katie Mullen and the Murphys. He ordered a crew member to stop blocking the passage-way, saying, 'For God's sake man, let the girls through to the boat', and the man swiftly complied. James threw his cap to Katie Gilnagh as the lifeboat was lowered into the icy sea with the words 'Good-bye forever.' The four girls survived. Brave James was lost.

Eight days later the Mackay-Bennett vessel recovered the body of James Farrell from the sea, with his Rosary beads still in his hands. His body was sealed in canvas, weighed, there was a brief religious service and then he was buried at sea on 24 April 1912.

This is the official record of his recovery and possessions, from the Halifax coroner's office:

No. 68. Male. Estimated age 40. Hair dark. Moustache light.
Clothing – Dark suit, black boots, grey socks.

Effects – silver watch, two purses (one empty) the other with \$10.00, 3s and 2 and a half d., and 10 kronor; two studs; cameo; beads, left on body.

Name on third class ticket No B67233 [sic] – James Farrell, Longford.



John Kiernan

John Kiernan (aged 25) and his brother Philip (aged 22), Fostra, Aghnaccliffe

John and Philip were sons of John and Catherine Kiernan. John had already emigrated from Longford to Jersey City, where he worked as a bar tender. He returned home to bring his younger brother to the U.S. John had a relationship with a neighbour, Margaret Murphy, before he emigrated and unbeknownst to him, she and her sister Kate planned to travel back with the Kiernan brothers.

Thomas McCormack, a cousin of the Kiernans, also went aboard the Titanic, and shared a room with them.

Thomas McCormack later stated that after the three began to realise there was an emergency, they made their way from their cabin. Philip waited for John, who had fallen behind, while Thomas continued on his way; he did not see either brother again. John was credited with saving the lives of the Murphys. He helped to pile up chairs that allowed them and others to climb up to the second class deck, despite attempts by crew members to stop them. John also gave Margaret a lifejacket and helped her to get on a lifeboat. While he was saying goodbye to her, he was driven back by crew members who thought he was attempting to get onto the boat.

IRISH TITANIC VICTIMS.

(From the "Irish Independent").
Mr. J. P. Farrell, M.P., has not let the case of the poor Irish lost victims of the Titanic drop, as will be seen by his question in the House of Commons yesterday, on which he secured heavily. Mr. Farrell has been in communication with a number of the relatives of the drowned persons in Ireland, and, as a result Mr. W. D. Harbinson (instructed by Mr. C. J. P. Farrell, Solicitor, Longford) will to-day make application to the Court for leave to appear in the case.

COMPENSATION TO TITANIC SUFFERERS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether his department has been invited to take any part in the distribution of funds collected for the relief of sufferers from the loss of the "Titanic," or whether they propose to suggest to the different collecting agencies at work a scheme of distribution in accordance with the claims of each set of relatives of lost persons; and, if so, whether he will urge that the families of deceased Irish steerage passengers, many of whom were proceeding to the United States of America in search of remunerative employment for the benefit of their families in Ireland, will receive early consideration.
MR. BUXTON: I do not think that the administration of the fund referred to by the Hon. Member as a Department should interfere, but I propose to send a copy of this question to the Lord Mayor of London for his consideration.

A communication from the London Mansion House on the same subject, informs an inquirer that it is most unlikely that there will be any separate distribution of the fund in the case of Irish families. All will be treated alike, whether Irish or English.
The London Mansion House Fund last night amounted to £243,000, and the Mayor of Southampton's Fund to £30,115.

Third Class Passengers.
Lord Mersey asked Mr. Farrell to confine himself to what were the proper issues, and if he did that there would be no difficulty in having the interests of the third class passengers represented. Conceivably there were issues that affected the third class passengers in this catastrophe which did not affect the first and second class, and if Mr. Harbinson arranged to represent all the third class passengers he would be glad to have his assistance.
"But," added his lordship, "don't turn me into a criminal judge to try charges of attempted manslaughter."
His Lordship then consented to Mr. Harbinson appearing for all the third class passengers, and again refused the renewed application of the representative of the widow of a first class passenger.
Mr. Farrell: There is some advantage in having been a colleague of yours in the House of Commons (laughter).
Lord Mersey: That is an insidious compliment (laughter). Home Rule is not yet through, but I am going to allow them all to be represented (laughter).
Leading Stoker E. Barrett, who was in the witness-box yesterday when the case adjourned, was afterwards further examined.

The "Freeman's Journal" in a sub-leader of Thursday says—
An amusing turn to the efforts of Mr. J. P. Farrell, M.P., to get representation for the Irish steerage passengers before the Titanic inquiry marked the opening of the proceedings yesterday. Mr. Farrell attended with his counsel (Mr. W. D. Harbinson), who again made application to be allowed to represent the steerage passengers. Lord Mersey seemed on the point of refusing the application when Mr. Farrell, M.P., intervened and called attention to the ill-treatment of two of his constituents whilst swimming for their lives in the sea. Incidentally he reminded Lord Mersey that they had been fellow-members of the House of Commons fifteen years ago. Whether it was due to Mr. Farrell's blarney or not, Lord Mersey at once appointed Mr. Harbinson to represent the entire steerage class, and when two other applications were made for separate representation he referred the applicants to Mr. Harbinson.