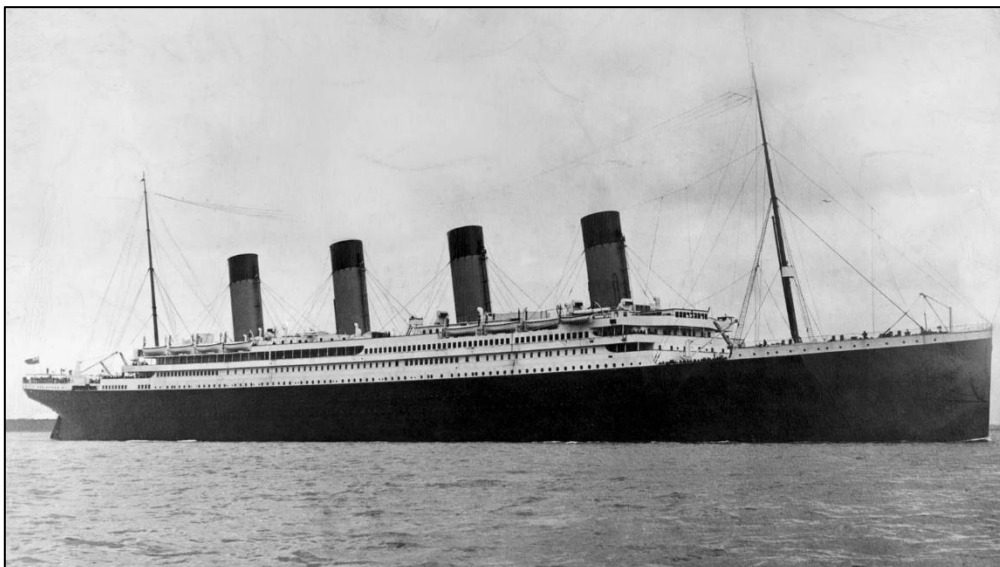




A Titanic link to Guernsey & Alderney Freemasonry



By Bro Matthew Tostevin
President Library & Museum

Much research has been done on the Titanic and the events leading up to the night of 14th April 1912 but has anyone considered if there was a link between the Titanic and Guernsey & Alderney Freemasonry? When looking at a recent post on Facebook about Freemasons, the Titanic and an apparent Lodge onboard I decided to examine if there were any local Freemasons who died as a result of this disaster. After finding a list of Brethren who had died, I wanted to find out if there were any local Brethren who had be omitted from that list, that is when I discovered that Freemason Bro Gilbert Cook was missing from the list.

Gilbert William Cook was born in Dorset in early 1880 to William Robert Cook a Sailor in the Merchant Navy and Anna Maria Cook née Gooden, he was baptised on the 28th March 1880 and was one of 7 children having 3 sisters and 3 brothers, Gilbert first appears on the 1881 census living with his family at No 4, Look Out in Wyke Regis, Dorset and on the 1891 census at No 1 Belmont Street, Wyke Regis.

His mother passed away in 1896, the family next appeared on the 1901 census still living at No 1 Belmont Street, minus Gilbert who presumably at this time had followed in his father's footsteps and left home and went to sea. By the time of the 1911 census Gilbert is still absent from the family home, now No 13 Franklin Road, Weymouth, and his father is by now described as a pleasure boat proprietor.

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										
Civil Parish (or Township) of	Municipal Borough of	Municipal Ward of	Parliamentary Borough of	Town or Village or Hamlet of	Urban Sanitary District of	Rural Sanitary District of	Ecclesiastical District of			
Wyke Regis	Weymouth	Weymouth	Weymouth		Weymouth		Holy Trinity			
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES Inhabited (U), or Building (B)	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN		
						Male, Female			(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Imbecile or Idiot (4) Lunatic	
9	Clifton Villa		Rosina J Whittle	Servant	Unm	23	Cook - Domestic Servant	Langton Herring Dorset		
	Leobour Cottage	1	William Smith	Head	Mar	66	Trinity Pilot	Lyme Regis Do		
			Lusan Do	Wife	Do	65		Weymouth Do		
			Samuel Pyms	Son-in-law	Mar	34	Shipwright	Do Do		
			Emma Do	G. dau	Unm	14	Scholar	Portsmouth Hants		
10	1 Look Out	1	Charlotte T. Bunt	Head	Unm	37		Wyke Regis Dorset		
			William C Saville	Nephew	Do	2		Do Do		
			John Fisher	Boarder	Do	36	Tinman	Do Do		
11	2 Look Out	1	Heath Martin	Head	Mar	26	Cellarman at Brewery	Dorchester Do		
			Julia Do	Wife	Do	26		Wyke Regis Do		
			Alice F. Do	Dau	Unm	3	Scholar	Do Do		
			Charles F. Do	Son	Do	1		Do Do		
12	3 Look Out	1	Eli Horsey	Head	Mar	46	Cooper	Wincanton Somerset		
			Carrie Do	Wife	Do	47		Castle Cary Do		
			Bessie Do	Dau	Unm	12	Scholar	Sherborne Dorset		
			Pedrick, C. Do	Son	Do	10		Weymouth Do		
13	4 Look Out	1	William Cook	Head	Mar	24	Sailor (Merchant)	Do Do		
			Anna Do	Wife	Do	24		Do Do		
			Lidney Do	Son	Unm	3		London		
			Gilbert Do	Do	Do	1		Weymouth Dorset		
			Jane Gooden	Mother	Mar	60		Marstock Do		
14	5 Look Out	1	Harbin J Hardy	Head	Mar	24	Mariner	Weymouth Do		
			Emma Do	Wife	Do	24		Coarse Abbas Do		
			Albert, J. Do	Son	Unm	2		Weymouth Do		
			Rosa, A. Dunford	Sister-in-law	Do	20	Cleaner			
Total of Houses...		6	Total of Males and Females...			13:12				

NOTE.—Draw the pen through such of the words of the headings as are inappropriate.

Eng— Sheet E.

1881 Census showing the Cook family residing at No.4 Look Out, Wyke Regis, Dorset, (Ancestry UK)

Administrative County of Dorset					The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										Page 3	
Civil Parish		Municipal Borough		Municipal Ward		Urban Sanitary District		Town or Village or Hamlet		Rural Sanitary District		Parliamentary Borough or Division		Ecclesiastical Parish or District		
of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		of <u>High Wycombe</u>		
Col. 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c, and No. or NAME of HOUSE	Inhabited (U) or Not (N)	Number of Houses in the Street or Lane	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of	Male	Female	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployed	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf-and-Dumb (2) Blind (3) Lame, Imbecile or Idiot	
14	Belmont Lane			Arthur Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			Arthur Spawthorne	Wife	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
15	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
16	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
17	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
18	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
19	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
20	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
21	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
22	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
23	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
24	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
25	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
26	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
27	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son	M	12			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles H. Spawthorne	Son	M	10			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Bartholomew Spawthorne	Son	M	8			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Son	M	6			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Arthur Spawthorne	Son	M	4			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
28	Belmont Lane			Charlotte Spawthorne	Head	F	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
	4 Belmont Lane			John Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				Charles Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				William Spawthorne	Head	M	34			Carriage Driver	X			Street Weymouth		
				James H. Spawthorne	Son											

exception where the normal procedure would cause serious hardship: the candidate could be dealt with "as a matter of urgency", and, if elected, was to be "thereupon initiated."

This rule dictated that the candidate must be personally known to the proposer, and the Worshipful Master was required to state in open Lodge the cause of the urgency and nature of hardship, this could have been in Guilbert's case he was about to go to sea and the Lodge could therefore have regarded the delay as creating serious hardship and used the emergency provisions to initiate him while he was available in Guernsey.

10

Loyalty Lodge

N^o 243 Cont^d

DATE OF INITIATION.	PASSING.	RAISING.	SURNAME.	CHRISTIAN NAME.	AGE.	RESIDENCE.	PROFESSION.	CERTIFICATE.
1907 Apr 17	May 16	June 19	Pegg	Sidney	28	Tort Guernsey	Staff Serg ^t	26.9.07
" June 19	Aug 21	Sep 18	Cook	Gilbert W	27	Franklin Villa Weymouth	Ship Steward	9.3.08
" July 15	do	do	Woolley	Alfred	24	Tort Guernsey	Sergeant	do
" Sep 18	Nov 20	Dec 18	Ruddock	Charles H	30	do	do	do
" Oct 16	do	do	Tomlins	William	56	do	Publican	do
" Sep 18	from	1536	Dunk	Joseph	.	do	Staff Serg ^t	do
1908 Mar 18	Apr 15	May 20	Rolls	Frederick C	23	do	Clerk	4.3.09
" Apr 15	June 17	Sep 16	Lawson	Edward C	35	do	Sergeant	do
" do	do	do	Hewitt	Robert	32	do	do	do
" May 20	do	do	De la Mare	Edgar N	40	do	Ironmonger	do
" Oct 21	Nov 18	Dec "	Cooke	Robert A	34	do	Band Master	do
" Jan 15	from	2598	Wood	Arthur James	.	do	Dentist	do
" do	from	2598	Butler	Edmund	.	do	Schoolmaster	do
" Dec 16	from	1247	Mountford	Arthur H	.	do	Dentist	do
1909 Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 21	Trampton	Arthur J	36	Pollet St	House furnisher	6.5.10
" do	do	do	Gallie	Edward W A	38	Route Isabelle	Collector Gas Co.	do
" Apr 21	May 19	June 16	Palmer	William J	43	Amballes	Manages Waterworks	do
" do	do	do	Le Bary	James E	44	Clement Rd	Inspector Railw. Co.	do
" May 19	June 16	July 28	Sharpe	Frank H	34	Arsenal	Staff Sergt. Major	do
" July 28	Sept 15	Oct 20	Rabey	Albert James	27	Bouet	Builder	do
" Oct 20	Nov 17	Dec 15	Himber	Edwin J. W	36	Pollet Street	Cabinet Maker	do

Lodge Register documenting Gilbert W Cook joining Loyalty Lodge No. 243 (UGLE)

TO THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER, WARDENS, OFFICERS AND
MEMBERS OF

LOYALTY LODGE

(No. 243).

I, *Gilbert William Cook.*

being a free man, and of the full age of
twenty-one years, do declare that, unbiassed by the
improper solicitation of friends, and uninfluenced
by mercenary or other unworthy motive, I freely
and voluntarily offer myself a candidate for the
Mysteries of Masonry; that I am prompted by
a favourable opinion conceived of the institution
and a desire of knowledge; and that I will
cheerfully conform to all the antient usages and
established customs of the Order.

Witness my hand, this *19th* day of
June 189*07* *G. W. Cook.*

Witness *J. L. P. Billiard*

Initiated *19th June 1907*

Passed *21st August 1907*

Raised *18th Sept 1907*

Declaration Book signed by Gilbert W Cook on the evening of his Initiation

(Loyalty Lodge No. 243)

Loyalty Lodge No. 243.
Masonic Temple, Le Marchant Street, Guernsey
Regular Night, June 19th 1907.

Members present, Wor. Bro. F. W. Tyler W.M.; George Downie I.P.M. P. Le Page I.P.M. Sec^y; J. A. Stranger I.M. D.C. F. J. Weyson I.M.; J. R. Peake I.M.; Bro. A. C. Weyson S.W.; P. W. Kimber J.W.; E. C. Robert S.D.; A. A. J. Pyke I.G.; L. Hornby, I. J. Ozanne; E. Stone; S. Pegg; F. H. Walton; J. A. Etor; F. Way; H. Rogers;

Visitors; Wor. Bro. F. M. Avey W.M. 1809; H. Le Pelley W.M. 2805 Bro. S. G. Agar, 84; A. W. Rose, 84; J. H. Hicks 1003.

The Lodge was opened in the first deg. - The minutes of the last regular & emergency meetings were read and confirmed.

The ballot was taken for Mr. Gilbert W. Cook, Ship's Steward Age 27 of 2, Franklin Villas, Weymouth, proposed by summonses as an emergency candidate by the W.M. Seconded by the I.P.M.

He was declared accepted. The Financial Statement of the Temple B. of Management was read by the Sec^y. Resolved that it be accepted & entered in the Minute book.

Mr. Cook presenting himself, properly prepared, he was admitted & initiated into the mysteries & privileges of Antient F.M. as an F.A by the W.M. The working tools were presented by the J.W.

Copy of the Minutes Book from Loyalty Lodge No.243

Dated 19th June 1907 (Loyalty Lodge No.243)

By looking through the minute books of Loyalty Lodge No.243 it is clear Bro Cook did not attend the Lodge regularly this could be due to him residing off island, he did however keep in contact with the Lodge this is evident by an entry in the minute book dated 21st April 1909 where the Secretary records "Reference was made to a letter from Bro G. W. Cook, wherein he stated he has been ill, - undergone an operation, was consequently out of employment at present and unable to pay his dues just at present" the Lodge members having been concerned to hear of one of the Brethren in difficulty the Secretary records "After some questions were put and answered, it was proposed by the Secy and seconded by W Bro Tyler that the sum of Two Pounds (£2) be voted, one pound to be put to pay his dues and the other pound to be forwarded to him, carried"

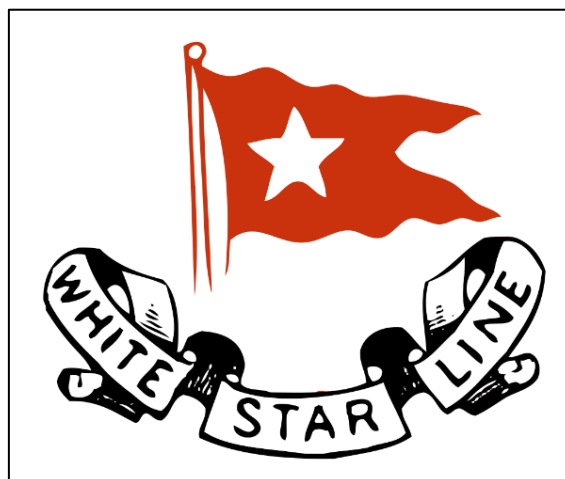
Reference was made to a letter from Bro. G.W. Cook, wherein he states that he has been ill, - undergone an operation, was consequently out of employment at present and unable to pay his dues just at present. After some questions were put & answered, it was Proposed by the Sec^y } That the sum of Two pounds
 Seconded by W. Bro. Tyler } (£2.) be voted, - one pound put to pay his dues and the other pound to be forwarded to him". Carried

Copy of the Minutes Book from Loyalty Lodge No.243

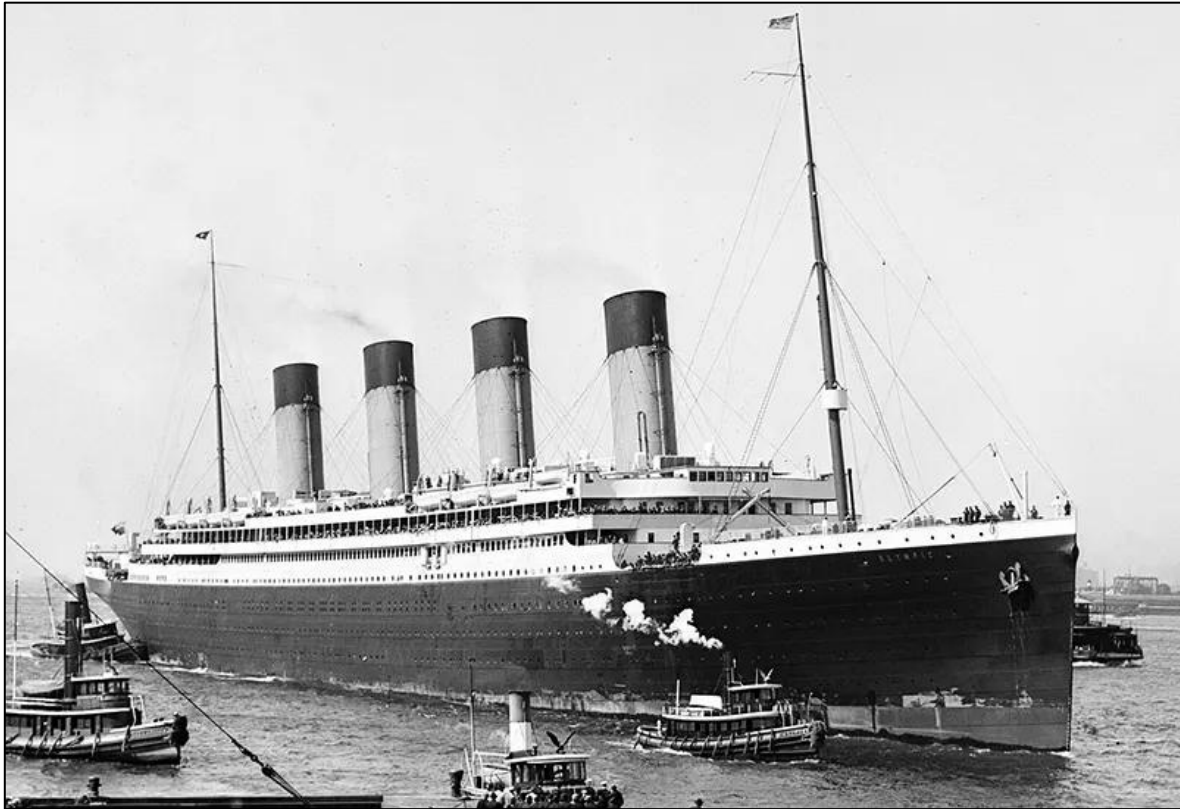
Dated 21st April 1909 (Loyalty Lodge No.243)

Gilbert having received this kind assistance from the Lodge he sent a further letter that was read out during the regular Lodge meeting on the evening of the 16th June 1909 to thank them, from then on there is no further mention in the minute book of any difficulty in payment, and it is assumed he regained his health and employment.

We know Gilbert must have gained experience as a steward as by 1911 he was working for The White Star Line and was serving as a steward aboard RMS Olympic a vessel that could carry up to 2,435 passengers, The White Star Line is best described as a pioneering maritime company that revolutionised the travel industry with its innovative ships and high level of service on the transatlantic travel route, and Gilbert would have been accustomed to the White Star Line's service and the expectations of its wealthy first-class passengers as well as other passengers.



White Star Lines Logo



RMS Olympic arriving at New York on her maiden voyage 21st June 1911

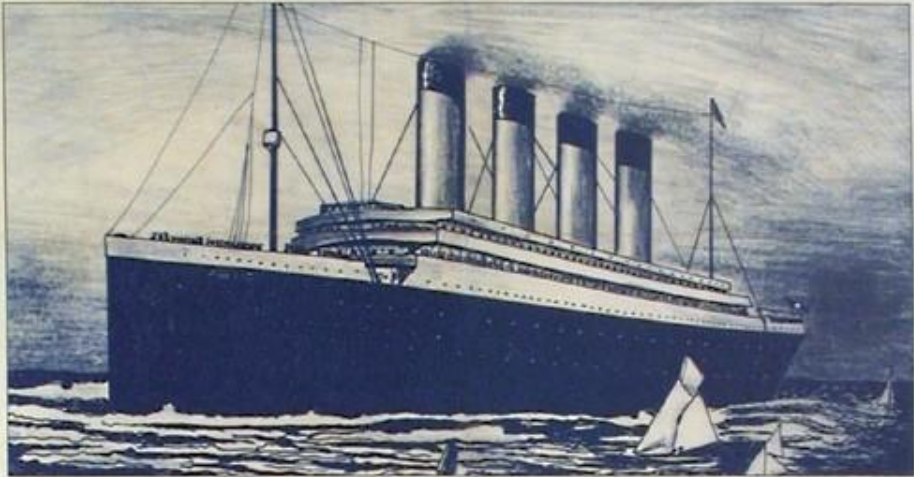
Gilbert most likely would have been onboard the RMS Olympic when on her fifth voyage on 20th September 1911, it collided with the British cruiser HMS Hawke. The collision took place as Olympic and Hawke were running parallel to each other through the Solent. As Olympic turned to starboard, the wide radius of the turn took the commander of the Hawke by surprise, suspecting the ships would come together, he was unable to take sufficient avoiding action. HMS Hawke was a Edgar-Class cruiser its bow, which had been designed to sink ships by ramming them, collided with Olympics starboard side near the stern, tearing two large holes in the hull, both above and below the waterline, resulting in the flooding of two of its watertight bulkheads and as a result of the collision the Olympic also gained a twisted the propeller shaft. Thankfully no one was killed or seriously injured in the collision, the crew making temporary patching repairs to the damage it was able to return slowly to Southampton under her own power. It took six weeks for the repairs to take place, the resulting enquiry found that the Olympics Captain was at fault due to the speed it was cruising which caused the Hawke to collide, the Captain of the Olympic was Edward John Smith who would later go on to be Captain of the Titanic.

The next ship we are aware that Gilbert served on was none other than RMS Titanic this was also the newest luxury British ocean liner operated by White Star Line and built by Haarland and Wolff shipbuilding company in Belfast, Ireland. Construction began on the 21st March 1909 and the ship was launched on the 31st May 1911, and was the second of three luxury Olympic-class ocean liners to be built the lead vessel was RMS Olympic and the final ship in the class was RMS Britannic.

They were by far the largest vessels of the British shipping company White Star Line's fleet, which comprised of no fewer than 29 steamer ships and tenders in 1912.

RMS Titanic was one of the largest ships afloat in the world upon entering service measured over 882 feet and maximum breadth of 92 feet 6 inches and was registered in Liverpool. The ship was designed to be the pinnacle of comfort and luxury that included a gymnasium, swimming pool, smoking rooms, fine dining restaurants and cafes, along with a Victorian style Turkish bath and hundreds of high-quality cabins. The transatlantic crossing was advertised as a floating luxury hotel with fine dining with the first-class experience aimed at the very wealthy.

WHITE STAR — AMERICAN LINE
SOUTHAMPTON — NEW YORK SERVICE



THE ROYAL MAIL TRIPLE-SCREW STEAMER
“TITANIC”
WILL BE DESPATCHED FROM
SOUTHAMPTON TO NEW YORK
ON HER MAIDEN VOYAGE
On WEDNESDAY, April 10th, 1912, at noon
(Calling at Cherbourg and Queenstown)
LOADING BERTH - WHITE STAR DOCK
DISCHARGING BERTH - NEW YORK CITY

Goods are only received subject to the exceptions and restrictions of liability contained in the usual Bill of Lading of the Company. Merchandise on quay awaiting shipment is at Shippers' risk of loss or damage by fire and/or flood. All risk of Lighterage to be born by Shippers.

Goods for the above Steamer will be received at the Railway Stations up to 6.30 p.m. on Monday, April 8th (unless previously full).

FINE GOODS RATE SOUTHAMPTON TO NEW YORK
37/6 and 10/- per 40 Cubic Feet

APPLY TO **THE WHITE STAR LINE**
38, Leadenhall Street
1, Cockspur Street
30, James Street

LONDON
LIVERPOOL
SOUTHAMPTON

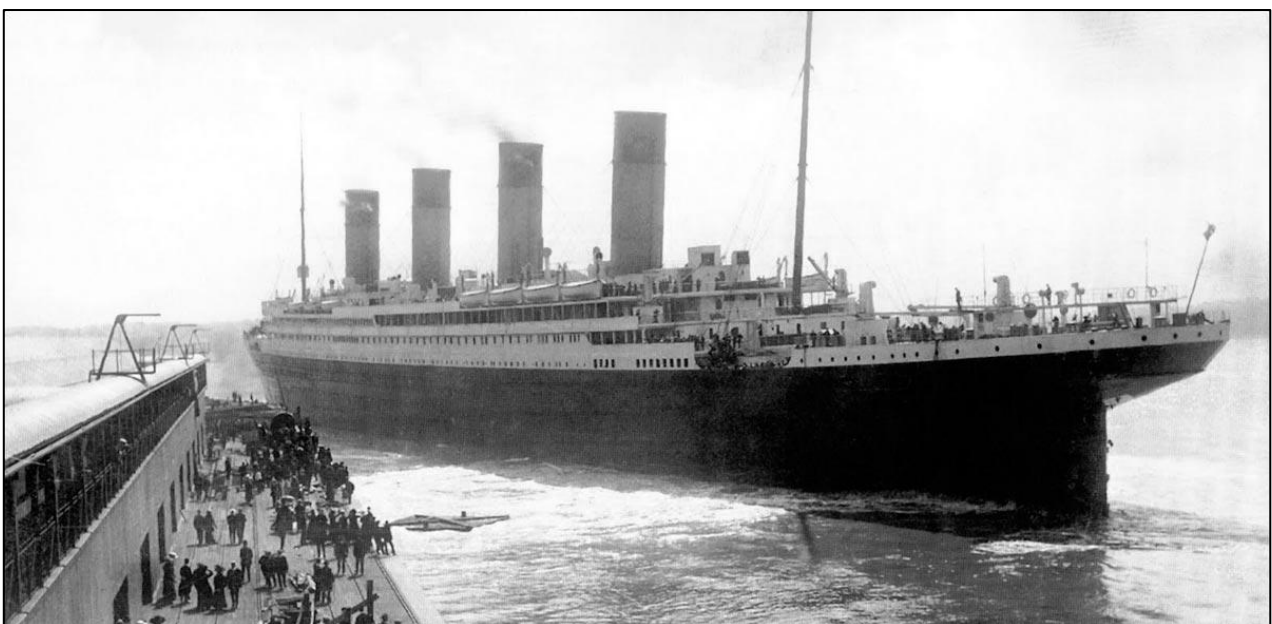
Advertising poster for the Titanic's Maiden voyage 10th April 1912

The ship had the most advanced safety features of the day, such as watertight compartments and remotely and manually activated watertight doors, which contributed to the ship's reputation as "unsinkable", the cost to build the ship was £1.5 Million, approximately £190 Million in today's money.

A further interesting Masonic link is the radio communications onboard then known as wireless telegraphy that the Titanic was equipped with. Leased from the Marconi International Marine Communication Company, who also supplied two of its employees to maintain a 24-hour watch in a dedicated radio room, this was some of the most advanced technology of its time being able to broadcast long distant ship-to-shore and ship-to-ship communication. The Marconi wireless telegraph, transmitting coded electrical impulses by radio waves. There was no voice communication; messages were sent via Morse code. The inventor of this telegraphy was Guglielmo Marconi who was also a Freemason and a member of Lodge Concordia in Bologna, Italy,



Guglielmo Marconi c.1902 (Science Museum Collection)



RMS Titanic departing Southampton at midday on her maiden voyage

RMS Titanic undertook its maiden voyage on the 10th April 1912 departing from Southampton before heading to the northern coast of France to collect passengers from Europe and recrossing the channel to collect passengers from Queenstown before then heading onto New York. In total there were 908 crew members looking after 1,317 passengers onboard including 109 children.

We know one of those crew members on board this maiden voyage was Gilbert now aged 32. He signed his contract to serve on the Titanic on the 4th April 1912 six days before its departure from Southampton, and would have boarded the ship by 6am on the 10th April 1912. He was employed as a first-class saloon steward working in the Victualling Department, this means he would have been working within the first-class passenger areas of the ship during the voyage and his pay at the time was £3 15s per month.

As a first-class steward his role was essentially to provide a hotel quality service to the 324 first-class guests on board, 9 of which were from Guernsey. His duties would have been to set and prepare tables, serve meals and refreshments, clear table settings between courses and attend on passenger's requests, also ensuring that the dining room was clean and presentable.

Beyond working in the dining areas of the ship he would have also helped direct the passengers around the ship assisting the elderly and help moving luggage, the emphasis was very much on providing a personal high-level service expected by first-class passengers of the day.



First Class staircase on the Titanic



First Class dining room on the RMS Titanic like one of the areas where Gilbert would have worked



Captain Edward John Smith

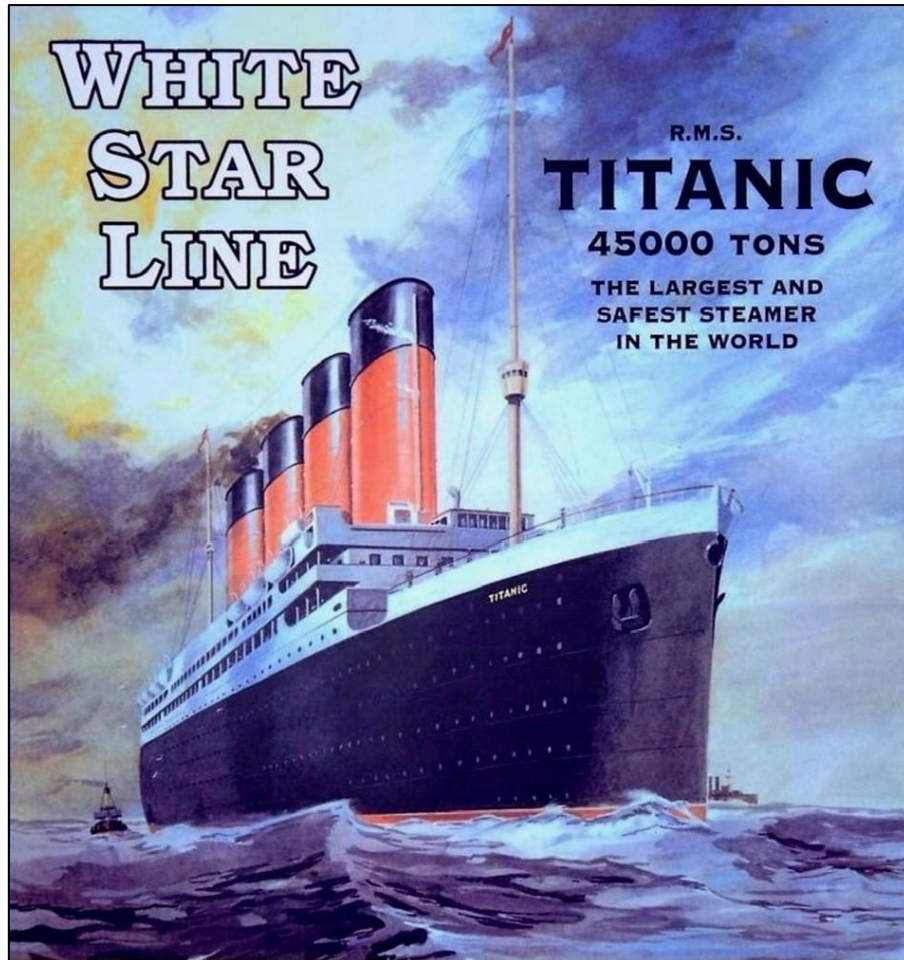
Like all crew onboard the Titanic Gilbert would have had responsibilities in the event of an emergency in such case his normal responsibilities would cease, and he would have been expected to assist with the evacuation of the ship. Stewards could be instructed to go through the passenger accommodation and alert people, directing passengers towards the boat deck and muster points. Also assisting to get lifejackets on particularly woman, children and the elderly and escorting passengers to the lifeboats. This being one of the most important emergency duties. Much had been spent to market this as the safest vessel in the world even being declared “the safest and designed to be unsinkable”, although Gilbert would have been aware of what his duties in the event of an emergency were, I’m sure he did not think that just ten days after signing his contract and only four days into its maiden voyage he would have to put these skills to use. At 11.40pm on the 14th April 1912 in the North Atlantic Ocean the Titanic reputedly struck an iceberg resulting in the most famous peacetime maritime disaster in history, the Titanic only having 20 lifeboats this meant that only just over half of those onboard would have a space on one.

For two hours after the incident started, the wireless telegraph operators Jack Phillips and assistant operator Harold Bride sent out a stream of distress signals and messages that were eventually picked up by vessels. One of the first to receive those was the RMS Carpathia the vessel had departed New York City on the 11th April 1912 bound for Fiume, Austria-Hungary, carrying 983 passengers and crew. Carpathia's wireless operator, Harold Cottam, had missed previous messages from Titanic, as he was on the bridge at the time not in the radio room.

After his shift ended at midnight, he continued listening to the transmitter before bed, and received messages from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, stating they had private traffic for Titanic. He thought he would be helpful, and at 12:25 am on the morning of 15th April, he sent a message to Titanic, stating that Cape Cod had traffic for them. In reply he received Titanic's distress signal, stating that they had struck an iceberg and needed immediate and urgent assistance, this was the first time in history that the internationally agreed signal of distress was sent out from a sea liner. The message was rushed to the First Officer Horace Dean who then woke the sleeping Captain Arthur Henry Rostron who ordered the ship to turn around and head towards the Titanic’s location.



**Harrold Cottam as a student at the British School of Telegraphy
(Encyclopaedia Titanica)**



Poster declaring the Titanic as the Safest Steamer in the World

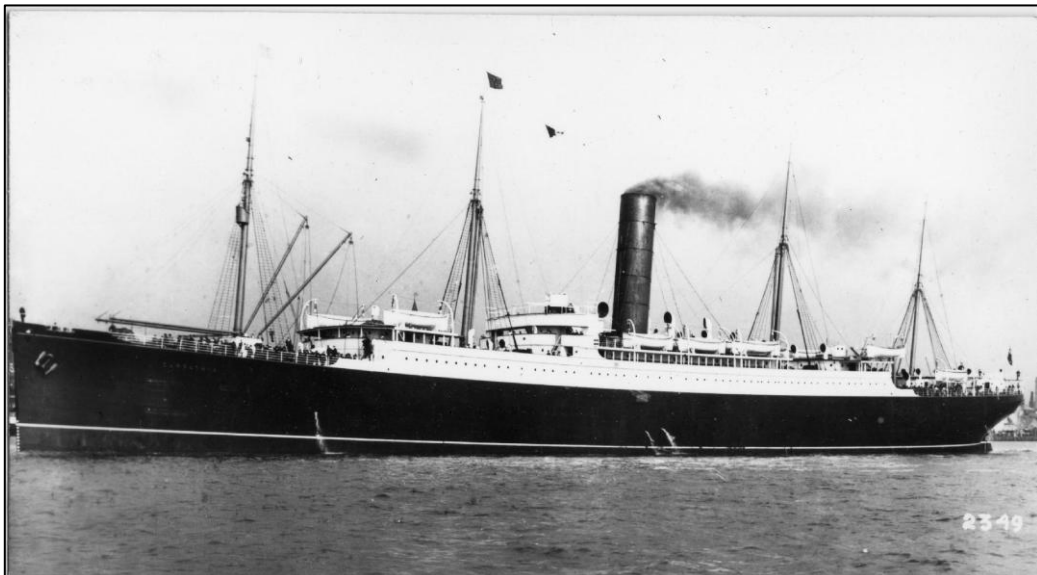


Captain Arthur Henry Rostron

Harold Cottam, meanwhile, messaged the Titanic that the Carpathia was coming as quickly as possible and that they expected to reach their location within four hours. He then refrained from sending more signals after this, trying to keep the network clear for Titanic's distress signals

The Carpathia's distance to the Titanic was 58.22 nautical miles and it took the ship three and a half hours to arrive at Titanic's location. By that time, it was too late the Titanic sunk at 02.20am on the 15th April 1912 some two hours and forty minutes after hitting the iceberg resulting in the death of 1,635 people one of those being Gilbert. Of the 908 crew members onboard 685 perished and of the 109 children 53 perished.

The Carpathia arrived at the Titanic's distress call position at approximately 4am and for the next four hours the ship took on survivors from the lifeboats and carried out an extensive search for survivors. The crew and the ships passengers assisting by providing warm food, drinks, blankets and accommodation. By 9am the last survivor had been picked up and the Carpathia headed back to New York arriving on the evening of the 18th April 1912.



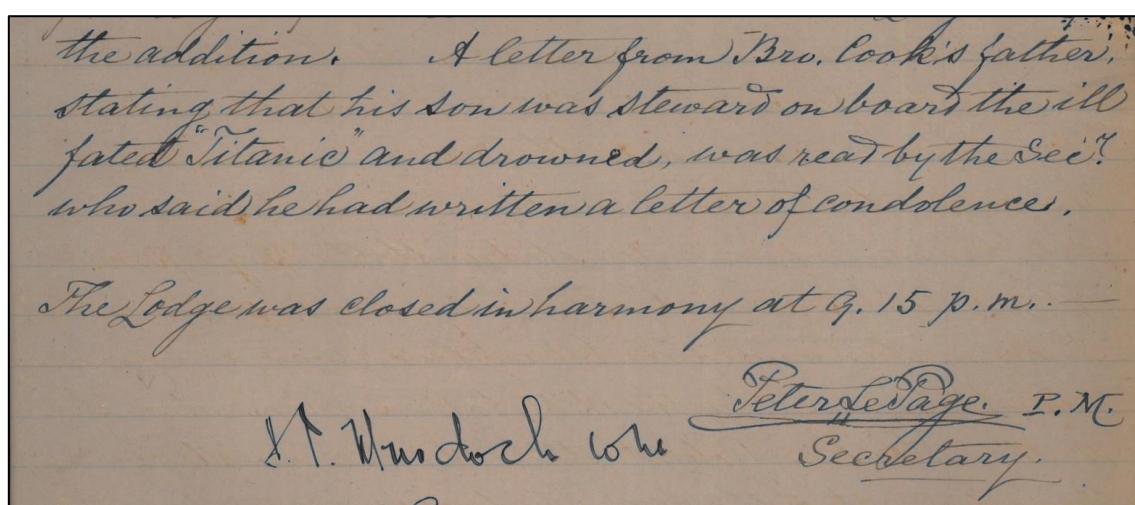
RMS Carpathia



Titanic survivors aboard the Carpathia

Although we cannot identify the exact role Gilbert played in the ship's evacuation and how many people he may have helped as a Steward in the first-class areas he would have helped to get passengers to the lifeboats and provide comfort in the way of blankets, Gilbert was lost in the sinking and his body if recovered it was never identified, this could indicate that he was still inside the vessel when it went down.

Gilberts father William was clearly aware that his son was a Freemason who had joined in Guernsey and considered it appropriate to notify the Lodge of his death, as an entry made in the publication "The History of Loyalty Lodge No 243 E.C 1810 – 1960" by WBro Vernon E Luff M.B.E, it records that on the 15th May 1912 "A letter from Bro. Cook's father, stating that his son was steward on board the ill-fated Titanic and drowned, was read by the Secy, who said he had written a letter of condolence".



Copy of the Minutes Book from Loyalty Lodge No.243

Dated 15th May 1912 (Loyalty Lodge No.243)

Another link to Freemasonry can be found in the captain of the Carpathia who was to go onto join Minerva Lodge No.2433 Birkenhead being Initiated on the 30th December 1913, Passed on the 27th January 1914 and Raised on the 1st September the same year his profession has him listed as a Master Mariner aged 44 years old.

112 Minerva Lodge								
NO. 2433 continued								
DATE OF INITIATION.	PASSING.	RAISING.	SURNAME.	CHRISTIAN NAME.	AGE.	RESIDENCE.	PROFESSION.	CERTIFICATE.
1913 Mar. 5	Apr. 2	May 7	Vernon	James Arthur	35	Liverpool	Salesman	18.6.13
" May 7	Nov. 5	Jan 11/14	Blamphin	John Charles	26	do	Music Director	18.9.14
" Dec. 3	Jan 27/14	Mar 4/14	Evans	Herbert	39	do	Passenger Agent	do
" do. "	do. "	do. "	Gleave	Arthur	30	do	Leather Merchant	do
" do. 30	Jan 27/14	Apr. 1/14	Rostron	Arthur Henry	44	St. Crosby	Master Mariner	27.5.14
" do. 30	do. "	do. "	Stevens	James	39	Birkenhead	Manager	do
1914 Jan. 7	Mar. 14	Apr. 1	Butler	Joseph Conrad	35	Blaydon	do	29.5.14

Lodge Register documenting Arthur Henry Rostron joining Minerva Lodge No.2433 (UGLE)

Although much research has been done over the years to identify the number of Freemasons who were on the Titanic the most recent number given is 29 (The Square Magazine 2025 Q2) however that list did not include Gilbert, this may be because in most records he is incorrectly listed as George. The 29 are made up of 9 first, 6 second and 3 third-class passengers, and 13 crew members belonging to the postal crew and all of the orchestra, one of those being Percy Cornelius Taylor a Cellist aged 39, was Initiated into Musgrave Lodge, No.1597 on the 8th March 1902, Passed on the 12th June and Raised on the 20th September the same year he was Master of the Lodge 1908. Both British and American survivors reported that the last song the band played was the hymn “Nearer My God to Thee” this hymn has been associated with Freemasonry and can be found in Masonic hymn books and has been used at Masonic funerals and ceremonies.

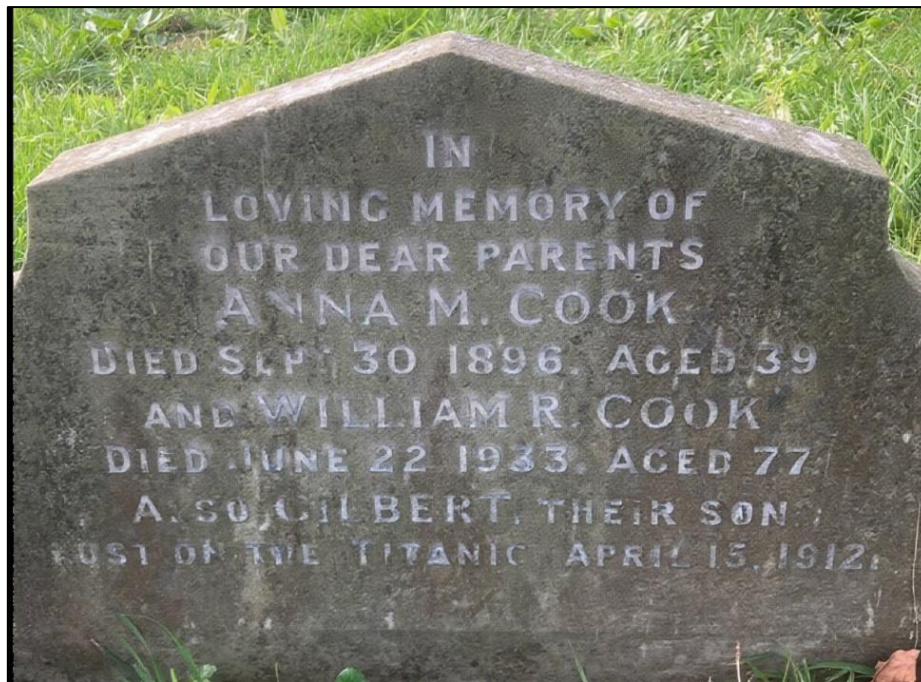
1902	Mar 18	June 12	Sep 20	Taylor	Percy Cornelius	29	Barpenden Rd W. Norwood	Accountant	41.11.2
				Taylor	Joseph		Grove Park Camberwell	do	
				Sty	Richard Stevens		Katterley Rd Sidcup	Merchant	
				Tray	Overbury	35	48 Charlotte St. Hull	Warehouseman	17.12.71

Lodge Register documenting Percy Cornelius Taylor joining Musgrave Lodge No.1597 (UGLE)



Engraving of the sinking of the Titanic (Science Museum Group Collection)

There is no grave for Gilbert however he is remembered on his fathers and mother's headstone at Weymouth Cemetery, Weymouth and Portland Borough, Dorset,



Family Grave at the bottom of the Headstone with the wording “Also Gilbert their son lost on the Titanic April 15.1912 (Find a Grave)

We have identified that Gilbert is incorrectly recorded as George in some records and this has also been the case on the plaque of the new Titanic Memorial in Belfast unveiled in 2012, at the time of writing this I have made contact with the Titanic Museum, The Public Records Office of Northern Ireland and Belfast Titanic Society to find out how this error can be resolved and Gilbert remembered correctly.



Belfast Memorial to those who lost their lives in the Titanic Disaster

Thanks, must be given to the following Brethren for their assistance and the following sources of information.

VWBro. Simon Hamon

Loyalty Lodge No.243

Museum of Freemasonry

Science Museum

Encyclopaedia Titanica

findagrave.com