

R. M. S. TITANIC.

“ I have received an article from Ian, Earl of Rothes with further information on the part that his Grandmother played after the sinking of the Titanic.” *Barrie Leslie.*

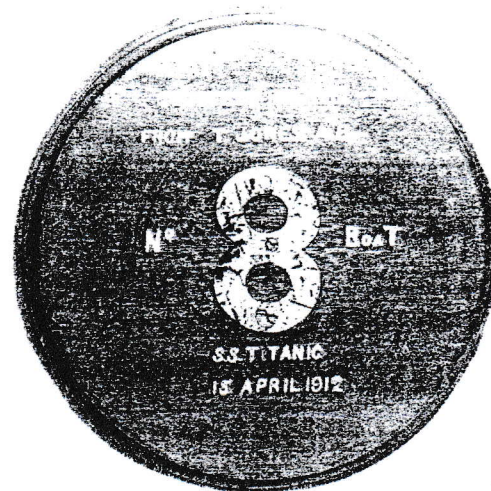
There were three members of Titanic's crew in the lifeboat No 8 that the Countess of Rothes was in. One was Able Seaman Jones, one was a cook and the other was a steward. The cook and the steward, not being seamen, did not play a very active part in the rescue.

Lady Rothes, being determined not to favour one member of the crew above another, presented each of them with a small cash sum and an engraved silver pocket watch. The watches had the recipient's initials on the back, and inside the case was the inscription “12 April 1912 from the Countess of Rothes”. There was no mention of the name Titanic, so it could be argued [and later was] that unless a person was familiar with details of the disaster, there was no reason to associate the watch with the Titanic tragedy.

We knew of the existence of Able Seaman Jones's watch through his letters, he and my grandmother kept in touch until she died in 1956. So it was no great surprise when we learned that his watch was to be sold as a result of the increased interest in Titanic memorabilia, due to the recent film. A family Trust was able to secure it, and shortly after this sale, we learned of another identical watch belonging to the steward, Albert Crawford. It had passed to his daughter and then to a friend, who was unaware of its importance

or the significance of the inscription. She had offered it to a jeweller in part payment for repairs to a clock. The jeweller offered her a token price for the scrap value, which she accepted, and later it was alleged that he boasted that he had acquired a nest egg for his retirement. When he was later charged with fraud, he removed the inscription on the inside of the watch in an attempt to destroy the evidence. He was eventually convicted, found guilty and fined a substantial sum of money.

Since we already had Jones's watch, this one was of little interest to us, but I am glad to say that it was sold to an English collector, who had the inscription reinstated, and the past lady owner received a fair price for the watch.



The Plaque made by A/b Jones incorporating the actual number of the lifeboat. [By kind permission of The Leslie Trust]

All this publicity brought to light the fact that Lady Rothes had given the three crew members in the lifeboat, identical watches which we had not previously known about.

[2] Somewhere in the world there may still be another, the third watch that was originally given to the cook.

Another interesting point about the watches came to light with all the new information. The three identical watches were bought at the same time, when instructions would have been given for the engraving. All had an identification number, the same number being on the watch movement and the case. During the process of the engraving the movement is taken out of its case to prevent damage. Examining the two watches belonging to Jones and Crawford, it appears that the watches were duly separated for the engraving, but had been installed with the wrong cases on completion of the engraving, for Jones's movement bears the number of Crawford's case, and vice versa.



*Noel Lucy Martha Edwardes born 25 Dec 1879
Kensington London and married Norman Evelyn
Leslie 19th Earl of Rothes, 19 April 1900.*