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Francis Hurd Stadler *Titanic* Collection, 1912-1996

2 boxes

REPOSITORY

Missouri Historical Society Archives

P.O. Box 11940

St. Louis, MO 63112-0040

314-746-4510

archives@mohistory.org

DONOR INFORMATION

The collection was donated to the Missouri Historical Society Archives by Mrs. Frances Hurd Stadler in February 1998.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In April 1912, Mrs. Frances Hurd Stadler's parents, Carlos, a reporter for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and Katherine Hurd, embarked on a European vacation aboard the Cunard liner *Carpathia*. Their journey was pleasant but uneventful until the morning of Monday, April 15, when the Hurds awoke to discover that their ship was standing still. A stewardess informed them that the *Titanic* had struck an iceberg and gone down in the night, and the *Carpathia* was taking on her passengers.

When word of the *Titanic's* sinking reached the states, *New York World* publisher Ralph Pulitzer wired a message to Hurd instructing him to write a complete story of the sinking, including all obtainable interviews with survivors. Seeking to keep the story from the press, the *Carpathia's* wireless operator did not forward the message to Hurd, who had identified himself as a newspaperman. The *Carpathia's* captain, Arthur Henry Rostron, refused to allow Hurd any wireless communication with the *Post-Dispatch* or its affiliate, the *New York World*. Hurd's reporter's instinct led him to recognize the magnitude of the story, and he enlisted Katherine's help in piecing together the details of the *Titanic's* sinking.

Both Carlos and Katherine interviewed the survivors, their task made difficult when, in an effort to prevent note taking about the disaster, Captain Rostron ordered all stationery removed from the ship's writing salons. The Hurds took notes on whatever scraps of paper they could find, including toilet paper. Upon realizing their cabin had been searched, Katherine began to remain in the room when the stewards came in, sitting on the notes to keep them from being confiscated.

Carlos anticipated that the *Carpathia* might be met before docking in New York, and so prepared to toss the story overboard to a waiting tugboat, should one appear. He carefully wrapped the manuscript in waterproof material and tied it to a cigar box. For added buoyancy he attached a number of champagne corks to the package. Hurd's foresight paid off as the *Carpathia* was met in New York harbor by a small fleet of boats sent out by rival newspapers. Recognizing a colleague on one of the tugs, Hurd broke away from the *Carpathia* crewmen who tried to restrain

him at the ship's rail and tossed his story to the boat. The package safely received, the tug quickly headed for port, and before the *Carpathia's* gangplank had been lowered to the pier, Hurd's story was being telegraphed to the *Post-Dispatch*.

Carlos Hurd's 5,000-word article was the first complete account of the *Titanic* disaster. On April 19, 1912, his story appeared on the front page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *New York World*, and scores of newspapers around the world.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains original correspondence, telegrams, magazines, newspaper clippings, whole newspapers and memorabilia collected by Frances Hurd Stadler's parents, Carlos and Katherine Hurd, between 1912 and 1949, as well as newspaper and magazine clippings relating to her parents and the *Titanic* disaster that she has collected over the intervening years.

The following abbreviations have been used in this inventory:

ALS Autograph Letter Signed (a letter entirely in the hand of and signed by the author)

n.d. no date

TLS Typescript Letter Signed

INVENTORY

- 1912 April 13 ALS Katherine to Frances [Lee (sister)], in pencil, on *R.M.S. Carpathia* stationery regarding daily ship board life. "Here we are sailing calmly along & if we keep up this slow and steady gait our fears of sea sickness will seem a joke." 4 pages
- [1912 April] Handwritten interview notes, in pencil, author unknown. Probably written between April 15th and 19th by someone interviewing survivors. The donor of this collection was unable to identify the handwriting but was certain that it was not in the hand of either Carlos or Katherine Hurd. 2 pages
- 1912 April 18 ALS K. [Katherine] to mother, in pencil, regarding the sinking of the *Titanic* and boarding of survivors. "At that time, we had taken on board passengers from a number of the *Titanic*'s boats, and after I got on deck the last two boats were unloaded. Our decks & dining rooms were swarmed with the rescued..." 3 pages
- 1912 April 18 Telegram from Ralph Pulitzer to Carlos Hurd, *Carpathia*, New York, regarding delivering of his full report to the tug *Dazelline*. 1 pages
- [1912] April 19 Unsigned note in grease pencil, probably in the hand of Ralph Pulitzer regarding a bonus and extra vacation to Mr. Hurd. 1 page
- 1912 April 19 TLS F.D. White to Carlos Hurd, Rome, Italy, regarding \$1000 check forwarded to Hurd's account and guarantee of extra vacation. 1 page with envelope.
- 1912 April 20 ALS W.A. Kelsoe to "Friend Hurd," congratulating him on splendid story, suggestions of sites to visit in Heidelberg. 2 pages with envelope and cutting from another item with printing "Verbindung Rupertia, Heidelberg."
- 1912 May 14 Telegram to Carlos Hurd, Rome, Italy, mentioning that the attached message was later canceled by the *World* [probably transmitting telegram of 18 April]. 1 page with envelope.
- 5 June 1912 ALS Carlos & Katherine to Leona [Cordell (Katherine's sister)], on Avondale Hotel, London, stationery, regarding their vacation in London and plans for their return aboard the Leyland liner *S.S. Devonian*. 6 pages
- 19 June 1912 TLS Charles S. Mills to Mr. Hurd stating "We were all very proud of your work in connection with the wreck of the *Titanic*..." 1 page
- 19 June 1912 ALS Mother [Katherine] to children, on *S.S. Devonian* stationery, telling them that "we are thinking of you and all at home..." and "hoped to arrive in Boston next Sunday (the 23rd) – but we had very rough sea..." 3 pages

- 22 June 1912 ALS Katherine to mother, on *S.S. Devonian* stationery, regarding plans for arrival in Boston, shipboard conditions and experiences in London and Paris. 6 pages
- 1912 Newspaper clippings saved by the Hurds including “2 Little Orphans of *Titanic...*,” and “Hurd’s Narrative Tied to Buoy...” 5 items.
- 1912 Color postcard of the *R.M.S. Carpathia*. 1 item.
- 1912 Scrap of letterhead stationery from the *R.M.S. Carpathia* with small engraving of ship. 4.5. in. x 2.5. in. 1 item.
- 1912 Blank White Star Line stationery. 5 in. x 4 in. note card; 2 sheets of 5 in. x 8 in. (folded) writing paper; 2 sheets of (folded) writing paper 7 in. x 9 in.; 9.5 in. x 4 in. envelope. All the writing paper has a red pennant with a white star as an imprint with the lettering “**ON BOARD S.S. _____**” 6 items
- 1912 Blank *R.M.S. Titanic* stationery [given to the Hurds by an unknown survivor]. 5 in. x 8 in. (folded) writing paper with letterhead “White Star Line *R.M.S. Titanic*” and containing 1/3 starboard profile of the ship. 1 item.
- n.d. *R.M.S. Carpathia* “Programme of Grand Concert” for 26 April 1912. 2 pages Xerographic copy only.
- 27 April 1912 The Fourth Estate (no. 948) containing a brief article on page 25, column 4, about Carlos Hurd. 1 volume.
- October 1912 *The Publishers’ Guide* (vol. XX, no. 5) containing an article by James French Dorrance describing Hurd’s role in the press coverage of the *Titanic* story. The story appears on pages 37-38 under the title “The Sea-going Reporter. Tugging the *Titanic* Story.” 1 volume.
- 6 October 1949 TLS Herbert Bayard Swope to Carlos Hurd regarding the inclusion of Hurd’s story of the *Titanic* in the revised edition of “A Treasury of Great Reporting.” 1 page with envelope.
- 1912-1962 Newspaper and magazine clippings, some original and some xerographic copies only, includes the story “When the *Titanic* Sank!” by Carlos Hurd, from *The Quill*, June 1932. 10 items, some with multiple pages.

- 1980-1988 Newspaper and magazine clippings, some original and some xerographic copies only, includes the article "My Father's Scoop of a Lifetime," by Frances Hurd Stadler, from *Mature American*, Spring 1988. 11 items, some with multiple pages and some in German.
- 1990-1997 Newspaper and magazine clippings, some original and some xerographic copies only, includes article "The Unsinkable Carlos Hurd," from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 13 April 1992. 23 items, some with multiple pages and one in German.
- 1994-1997; n.d. Flyers, pamphlets, magazines and postcards, includes article "Why the 'Titanic' Sunk," translated from *La Technique Moderne*, 1 July 1912. 8 items, some with multiple pages.
- 28 Sept. 1996 Original *Post-Dispatch* Weatherbird artwork "Does This Theory Float?" showing the Weatherbird holding a booklet with the title "Bad Metal." 1 item.

OVERSIZE STORAGE BOX

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

folder 1	28 April 1912	Sunday, Society Cable edition
folder 2	22 April 1912	Home Edition, Extra (5 copies)
folder 3	22 April 1912	Night Edition
folder 4	19 April 1912	No edition noted and does not contain Carlos Hurd's article
folder 5	19 April 1912	Extra (1 complete; 1 partial copy)
folder 6	19 April 1912	Second Extra (1 complete; 1 partial copy)
folders 7-8	19 April 1912	Home Edition (4 copies)
folder 9	19 April 1912	Night Edition (partial copy only)
folder 10	19 April 1912	Final Sporting edition (partial copy only)
folder 11	18 April 1912	(4 pages only)
	20 April 1912	(cut out of front page only)
folder 12	17 April 1912	Night Edition (partial copy only)
folder 13	16 April 1912	Night Edition (partial copy only)
	16 April 1912	Home Edition

St. Louis Globe Democrat

folder 14	19 April 1912	Extra
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St. Louis Times

folder 15	19 April 1912	Extra
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St. Louis Star

folder 16	19 April 1912	Extra, 8 A.M.
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St. Louis Republic

folder 17 19 April 1912 Extra

The Evening World (New York)

folder 18 19 April 1912 (1 complete; 1 partial copy)

folder 19 18 April 1912 Extra No. 3