

THE TIMES

London, Britannia

November 22nd, 1886

Titanic Lost At Sky! No Trace of Mammoth Airship Found

London – The Royal Navy has given up the search for the missing passenger airship Titanic. The airship is now 3 days overdue.

The Titanic, the largest airship ever built, was scheduled to arrive in London from New York but vanished enroute without a trace. Authorities are baffled. There were no storms reported over the North Atlantic at the time, and no trace of the airship, even wreckage has been discovered by searching vessels. The airship was equipped with the new wireless telegraph technology, but its last messages disclose no hint of any problem.

One wireless telegraph message sent shortly before the airship vanished mentioned an intense Aurora Borealis effect, but scientists have dismissed this as having anything to do with the airship's loss. The Titanic was designed to stay in the air even with over half of her air sacks punctured. She was engineered to stay aloft should she set down at sea. The owners of the Titanic, the British Princess Passenger Ship Lines, have denied any possibility that the "unsinkable" ship could have failed.

The Titanic is only the latest of a number of airships that have vanished mysteriously over the Atlantic. Speculation of foul play has run rampant. The Hon. Sir Horace Griswold of her Majesty's Loyal Opposition criticized the government in the House of Commons yesterday. He said, "Airships flying the flag of Britannia are in peril today, their passengers and crews lost, because this government has not taken necessary steps to safeguard them from marauders, be they pirates or hostile foreign powers."

The First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Tewkesbury responded to the allegations from the House of Lords. "Let no one doubt that Britannia rules the skies. The strength of her naval airships is greater than that of any great power. The British airdreadnought Juggernaut is the most powerful single airship in the world. It is a matter of British pride and survival. Should we discover that a foreign power is responsible for the loss of these airships, it will be nothing less than an act of war to which Britannia will respond accordingly.

"However, even as we stand ready to defend British interests, we remind her majesty's subjects that the Titanic was not a military ship, and would be an unlikely military target. Nor was the wreckage of an attack found. We are ready for war, but we hope it will not be necessary. Meanwhile, we are searching for the answer to these mysterious disappearances.

"We have assigned our top men to the task of solving that mystery. We are also prepared to work in conjunction with other powers, some of whom have also been affected by the disappearance of airships. Along with the United States government, we have initiated an emergency conference of the Great Powers, to be held in two days time in New York. Envoys of the Great Powers and other interested nations will gather there to exchange information, coordinate efforts and seek a solution to this mystery.

Could it be Pirates?

London – As the mystery of the vanished Titanic remains unresolved, some authorities have raised the possibility that air pirates might be responsible. The wealthy passenger list of the Titanic would be a rare target for these modern buccaneers.

British naval authorities are investigating all possibilities including air piracy in their search for the Titanic and other missing airships.

Air piracy has been occurring with ever greater frequency in recent years, and all of the Great Powers have called for efforts to eradicate the menace of these pirates.

At the same time, some pirates, such as the dashing and notorious female pirate, Jeanne LeFoote have gathered a following amongst readers of the sensationalist press. LeFoote, who is known to command two pirate airships, The Cutlass and The Sabre, is said never to harm innocents who do not resist her daring raids.

Indeed, stories of the gallantry and mercy that LeFoote has shown to her victims are numerous.

Still, the authorities argue that LeFoote alone is responsible for the loss of property, ships and airships worth millions of pounds sterling, and for the lives of many who did not surrender to her criminal desires. The activities of other pirates, while less successful, have often been more brutal.

Emperor Napoleon of France has personally offered a reward for the capture of LeFoote, whose predations have particularly damaged French interests. It is expected that he will use the imminent gathering of government representatives to call for concerted action against pirates.

Still, confidential sources have argued that pirates have always previously left some trace of their crimes, if only in the form of wreckage. The debate continues.

Captain Freedom Seen in London

London – The famous American Mystery Man known only as Captain Freedom has been sighted in London's Whitechapel district. The good "Captain" holds no official military rank, and wears a mask, but has been credited in the popular American press with prodigious physical abilities that he uses to fight criminals.

Among the claims reported are that he is impervious to harm and able to lift an adult elephant over his head. Many here in Britannia have discounted these stories as typical American hyperbole, not unlike the stories of Davey Crockett killing a bear with his bare hands at the age of three. However, many local citizens reported seeing the masked man leaping from rooftop to rooftop over distances exceeding 30 yards.

Scotland Yard had no statement about Captain Freedom's presence in Britannia, but the Times has learned that Captain Freedom has booked passage for three back to New York aboard the airship Royal Victoria.

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Ripper Strikes Again!!

London – Police discovered yet another victim of the Ripper in Whitechapel early this morning. The police have not released a name, but sources disclosed that the victim was one Mary Haney and, like the previous seven victims, she worked as a prostitute in the area.

The grisly killings, which have left London gripped with fear, have also left Scotland Yard baffled. Sources reveal that the killer has been mutilating the bodies of his victims and removing internal organs with almost surgical precision. The viscera are then bizarrely arranged.

So troubled are the police by these

continuing murders that Scotland Yard has called in outside assistance. Sources report that Sherman Hornes, the famous consulting detective, has been advising the police, but has been as baffled as the officers involved.

With the Prime Minister himself reportedly demanding action, Scotland Yard has now also consulted the Alexander Crawley, the well-known spiritualist. Crawley visited the scene of the most recent murder early this morning. He was seen arguing with Hornes afterwards.

While Hornes, as is customary, refused to discuss his investigations,

Crawley took time to meet with reporters. The self-proclaimed “Beast of the Armageddon” had this to say:

“I am quite pleased to be able to offer Scotland Yard my assistance in catching this fiend. Where others, such as Sherman Hornes, have failed, my powers may give guidance. I am not confined as they are by the material facts. Rather I can use the secrets of the ancients to free my soul of the restraints that bind lesser men, be they physical, mental or moral. Already I have had insights into the mind of the killer, and soon his true desires will be known to me. After that it will be child’s play to find and stop him.”

I Want My Mummy!!

London – The envoy of the Pharaoh of Egypt, Sebekaten, has once again demanded the return of an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus and mummy that he claims were looted from his country. He further demands that the British government arrest archeologist Jacqueline Carnavon and extradite her to Egypt to face charges of antiquities theft and tomb robbery.

Carnavon has claimed that the treasures which she brought back to Britannia come from the tomb of Ankhonothotep, an Egyptian who lived in the time of Ramses the Great over 3,000 years ago. She claims that her archeological dig, and the subsequent export of artifacts, was done in accordance with all Egyptian laws. She has refused to return the mummy. Indeed, since the expedition was entirely privately funded, she claims ownership of the treasures.

Sebekaten however told reporters, “We have on record the official rejection of Miss Carnavon’s application to conduct an archeological dig. The permits which she used to fool the local authorities were forgeries. Refused permission because of her inexperience, she decided to continue on with her expedition illegally. When the Ministry of Antiquities discovered the dig, the entire tomb had already been swept clean of all its treasures and the sacred burial of the mummy disturbed.”

The dispute is rapidly rising to the level of an international incident between Britannia and Egypt. Egypt has suggested that the Suez Canal might be closed to British shipping or that diplomatic relations might be completely severed. British Foreign Office officials say that they are trying to get to the bottom of the matter and hope the issue will be resolved shortly.

They may be disappointed however, as a third claimant to the mummy enters the fray. Alexander Crawley has astounded London once again by laying claim to the mummy and sarcophagus. Crawley has long claimed to be an occult sorcerer, and has purported for years to be the reincarnation of Cagliostro, Nostradamus and Ankhonothotep. He now says that the body of Ankhonothotep is his and has demanded the “return” of his mummy to be dealt with in accordance with the proper rituals.

Crawley told reporters, “If I am to be denied possession of my own body, I cannot be responsible for the consequences. I shall be forced to consult with my solicitors.”

And what of the woman in the centre of all this? Jacqueline Carnavon has not shied away from controversy in the past. She was expelled from Oxbridge University for her unconventional approach, and the Royal Britannic Museum refused funding for her proposed expedition. Blaming her situation on a jealous colleague and rival, Carnavon apparently financed the expedition herself. She now claims that her discoveries vindicate her research and theories. However, archeological authorities seem slow to embrace her conclusions.

For Carnavon the resolution of the present affair may bring fame or an Egyptian prison.

Time and history will tell.

Opera Diva Lilith Caine to Perform in New York

London – Opera Diva Lilith Caine stopped in London last night en-route to an engagement in New York City. The divine Miss Caine has been performing before audiences in Europe for the past two years to unprecedented acclaim. Her final performance in Paris two nights ago in the opera “Gottterdammerung” (“The Twilight of the Gods”) by Wagner, was rewarded with a standing ovation which lasted over half an hour.

Miss Caine is said to have attracted the personal attentions of the French Emperor Napoleon himself, perhaps as much for her extraordinary beauty as for her exemplary vocal talents. The Emperor and the Diva have shared company for the past few months, but now will be parted.

No Leads in British Museum Theft

London – Scotland Yard remains baffled by a theft several days ago from the Royal Britannic Museum. Museum security is considered impeccable, and it is not yet known how the thieves accomplished the burglary.

So far as authorities have been able to determine, the only item taken was an ancient Egyptian artifact, a piece of jewelry known as the Onyx of Ozymandias. Ozymandias is another name for the famous Pharaoh Ramses the Great, who is believed to have owned the amulet over three thousand years ago.