TITANICA
A Haunted Titanic
by E. Merwin

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A Haunted Titanic

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BEARPORT PUBLISHING

New York, New York

Credits

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Publisher: Kenn Goin
Senior Editor: Joyce Tavolacci
Creative Director: Spencer Brinker
Photo Research: Editorial Directions, Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Merwin, E., author. Title: A haunted Titanic / by E. Merwin ; consultant: Melinda E. Ratchford, EdD, Associate Professor, Sister Christine Beck, Department of Education, Belmont Abbey College, Belmont, North Carolina.
Description: New York, New York : Bearport Publishing Company, Inc., [2018] |
Series: Titanica | Includes webography. | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Audience: Ages: 5-8.
Identifiers: LCCN 2017034363 (print) | LCCN 2017049942 (ebook) |
ISBN 9781684024919 (ebook) | ISBN 9781684024339 (Library) Subjects: LCSH: Titanic (Steamship)—Juvenile literature. | Shipwrecks—North Atlantic Ocean—Juvenile literature. | Haunted places—Juvenile literature.
Classification: LCC G530.T6 (ebook) | LCC G530.T6 M8 2018 (print) | DDC 910.9163/4—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2017034363

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For more information, write to Bearport Publishing Company, Inc., 45 West 21st Street, Suite 3B, New York, New York 10011. Printed in the United States of America.

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Death Dream

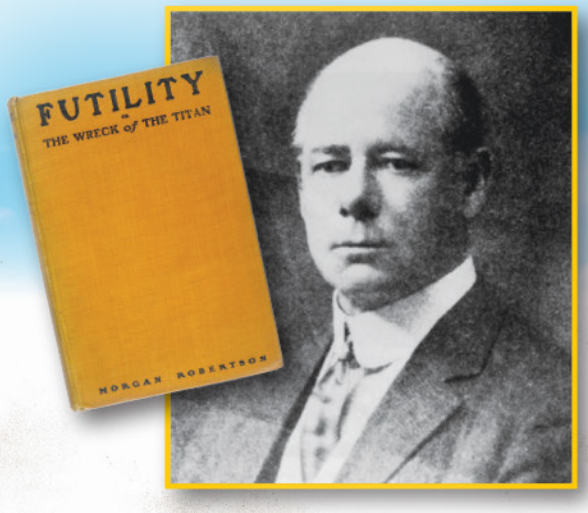
It was the night of April 14, 1912. Alone and dying at a shelter in Kirkcudbright, Scotland, Jessie Sayre, a young **orphan**, tossed and turned in a **feverish** sleep. Captain W. Rex Sowden, the director of the shelter, was called to comfort her. Meanwhile, hundreds of miles away, a huge ship called the *Titanic* cruised in the dark waters of the Atlantic Ocean toward an unseen iceberg.

Yet somehow Jessie sensed the *Titanic*'s **doom**. "Hold my hand, Captain," she cried. "I am so afraid. Can't you see that big ship sinking in the water?" Sowden told her it was only a dream, but Jessie insisted. "Look at all those people who are drowning. Someone called Wally is playing a fiddle and coming toward you." Then Jessie fell into a **coma** and died at 11:40 PM— the same time an iceberg struck the *Titanic*'s **hull**.

The *Titanic*, a British passenger ship, was the largest boat in the world when it was built in 1911. It was thought to be unsinkable.

Book of Doom

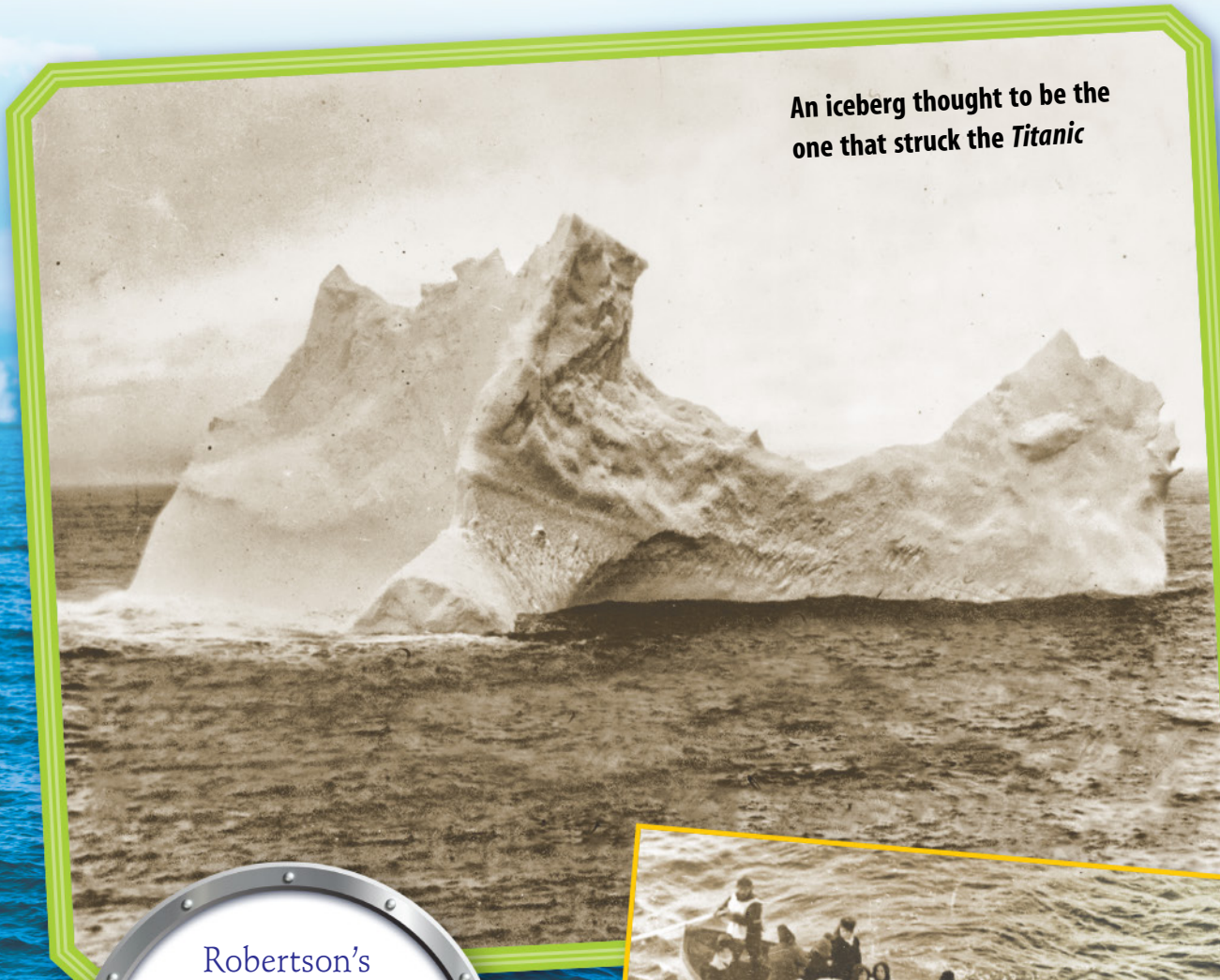
Jessie Sayre was not the first person to imagine the doomed ship and its passengers. Fourteen years earlier in 1898, Morgan Robertson had written a book about an **ocean liner** that was a **dead ringer** for the *Titanic*. Both ships were around 800 feet (244 m) long and could cruise at high speeds. Even spookier, Robertson named his ship the *Titan*.



Morgan Robertson's book was called *Futility, or The Wreck of the Titan*.

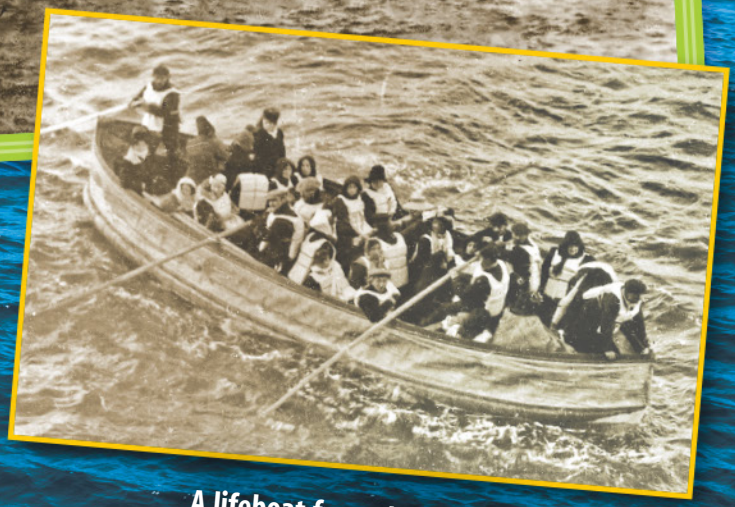
The *Titanic*

Just like the *Titanic*, the ship in Robertson's story was sailing across the North Atlantic in April when it struck an iceberg. How did this writer **foresee** the terrible accident long before the *Titanic* was ever built? No one will ever know.



An iceberg thought to be the one that struck the *Titanic*

Robertson's ship, similar to the *Titanic*, did not have enough lifeboats for all its passengers.



A lifeboat from the *Titanic*