

The SS *Californian* and Dundee: Scotland's Forgotten Leviathan by Harland Duzen  
Appendix: Summary of the *Californian's* Career 1902 -1915.

Author's Note: This timeline may not be definitive.

- January 30th - February 20th 1902 — *Californian* departed on her maiden voyage from Dundee to New Orleans. In command is Captain Jaffer.
- March 1902 — Chartered for 5 voyages by the Dominion Line. Funnel painted in Dominion Line Livery (red funnel with white band and black top). Begins first chartered voyage on March 29th from Liverpool to Portland.<sup>1</sup>
- May 16th 1902 — Collides with pier head while arriving in dock in Liverpool "*sustaining damage to several of her plates and hawsepipes*".<sup>2</sup>
- March 1903 — Reverted back to Leyland Line ownership.
- December 12th 1903 — While departing New Orleans, runs aground and becomes stuck for two days. The vessel "*sustained no apparent damage*."<sup>3 4</sup>
- April 4th 1907 — Arrives in Galveston from Cardiff having lost a propeller blade. Emergency repairs were made whilst at sea: "*The vessel was tilted forward and repairs made while the wheel was exposed*." *Californian* then departed April 5th to Liverpool for further work.<sup>5 6</sup>
- April 25th 1907 — Arrives back in Liverpool. She's back in service shortly afterwards reported to be in New Orleans on May 11th. (Under command by a Captain Partan?)<sup>7 8</sup>
- September 25th 1908 — Arrives in New Orleans from London and reports observing wreckage: "*Sept. 7, in lat. 49 20 N. 6 10 W, passed though large quantity of new cases floating deep in water, marked 'S.M & Co., Cairo' also a quantity of white painted wreckage, apparently part of ship's upper works. Weather at time fine and smooth sea*."<sup>9</sup>
- March 27th 1911 — Stanley Lord becomes Captain of the *Californian* and on March 30th departs Liverpool on his first voyage commanding her.<sup>10 11</sup>
- October 1911 — "*Docked and painted*" at Swan Hunter Shipyard in Wallsend (the same shipyard that built the *Carpathia*, *Titanic's* rescue ship).<sup>12</sup>
- October 1911 - April 1912 — Ship is fitted with a Marconi Wireless System capable of transmitting "*250 miles*" on the ship's 60-volt dynamo.<sup>13</sup> The ship's wireless callsign is MWL and her first Wireless Operator is Cyril Frumstone Evans.
- 22nd February 1912 — Used to deport a French Women from New Orleans back to Le Havre after "*she was brought to this country [America] for immoral purposes*."<sup>14</sup>
- April 5th - 19th 1912 — Departs London heading for Boston and during her voyage stops in an ice field and controversially doesn't respond to *Titanic's* distress rockets or sinking.
- April 19th - 27th 1912 — While in Boston, one of the ship's Firemen, William Kennerdale, dies "*after spitting blood*"<sup>15</sup>. At this time as well, the ship's proximity to the *Titanic* becomes known to the American Press and her Captain and some crew attend the US *Titanic* Inquiry.
- April 27th - May 10th 1912 — Travels from Boston to Liverpool for Captain, Officers and several crew members to attend as witnesses to the UK *Titanic* Enquiry.<sup>16</sup>
- May 17th 1912 — William Master replaces Stanley Lord as Captain of the *Californian*.<sup>17</sup>

- July 2nd 1913 — While in port at Vera Cruz, she suffers “*slight injury*” and “*considerable damage to cargo*” after a fire erupts in her No.3 and No.4 Holds.<sup>18</sup>
- November 9th 1915 — On voyage as a troopship between Saloniki and Marseille, She is crippled after being torpedoed by U-boat U-34 and later sunk after being torpedoed again by U-35, with the loss of one life, that of Firemen Richard John Harding. She now lies off the coast of Cape Matapan, Greece at 36.23N., 22.29E.<sup>19 20 21</sup>

## Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Sussex Agricultural Express, March 29th 1902, Page 10.

<sup>2</sup> “*Dundee-Built Steamer Damaged*”, Dundee Courier, May 17th 1902, Page 4.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.titanicinquiry.org/ships/californian.php>

<sup>4</sup> “*Wrecks And Casualties.*”, London Daily News, December 16 1903, Page 6.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.titanicinquiry.org/ships/californian.php>

<sup>6</sup> “*Maritime Intelligence.*”, Lloyd’s List, April 16th 1907, Page 11.

<sup>7</sup> “*Steamship Movements*”, London Daily News, April 26th 1907, Page 2.

<sup>8</sup> “*Ships Loading Directory.*”, Lloyd’s List, May 21st 1907, Page 3.

<sup>9</sup> “*Derelicts And Wreckage*”, Lloyd’s List, October 8 1908, Page 11.

<sup>10</sup> “*Captain Stanley Lord, Master of the SS Californian, career papers, Titanic articles and other papers*”, Liverpool Maritime Museum, Archives and Library.

<sup>11</sup> “*General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen*”, Cardiff (Found in the Appendix of book “*The Ship That Stood Still: The Californian and Her Mysterious Role in the Titanic Disaster*” by Leslie Reade).

<sup>12</sup> “*Ship Repairing*”, Jarrow Express, October 13th 1911, Page 8.

<sup>13</sup> “*British Wreck Commissioner’s Inquiry, Day 8, Testimony of Cyril F. Evans, cont.*” <http://www.titanicinquiry.org/BOTInq/BOTInq08Evans02.php>

<sup>14</sup> “*Little French Girl Deported By Government*” The Pensacola Journal 28th February 1912, page 2.

<sup>15</sup> (Book) “*Titanic And The Indifferent Stranger: The Complete Story Of The Titanic And The Californian*” by Paul Lee, Page 42.

<sup>16</sup> “*News Of The Shipping.*”, Shields Daily News, April 30th 1912, Page 4.

<sup>17</sup> (Book) “*Titanic And The Indifferent Stranger: The Complete Story Of The Titanic And The Californian*” by Paul Lee, Page 98.

<sup>18</sup> “*Fire On A British Steamer*”, Belfast News-Letter, July 3rd 1913, Page 7.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?58534>

<sup>20</sup> (Book) “*Titanic And The Indifferent Stranger: The Complete Story Of The Titanic And The Californian*” by Paul Lee, Page 250.

<sup>21</sup> The official report of her sinking (from Shipping Casualties / Return for Wreck Register) states that: “*Ship was struck by a torpedo from an enemy submarine at 7.45 a.m. when steaming at a speed of 12 knots. A French torpedo boat was escorting the ship at the time. A French patrol boat came up and tried to tow the vessel but tow rope broke at 1.20 pm. While trying to connect rope at 2.15 p.m. a second torpedo was fired and vessel began to make water fast. Crew were taken on board patrol boats. Master understands that ship sank later. Crew remained by ship for 7 hours, from first torpedo being fired. Second torpedo destroyed all ship’s papers which were in ship’s boat. Two firemen were scalded.*” (Report courtesy of Inger Sheil.)