



# Captain of the Carpathia: The seafaring life of Titanic hero Sir Arthur Henry Rostron

*Eric L. Clements*

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Responding to Titanic's distress calls in the early hours of 15 April 1912, Captain Arthur Rostron raced the Cunard liner Carpathia to the scene of the sinking, rescued the seven hundred survivors of the world's most famous shipwreck and then carried them to safety at New York. After twenty-five years at sea, the competence and compassion Rostron displayed during the rescue made him a hero on two continents and presaged his subsequent achievements.

During the First World War he participated in the invasion of Gallipoli and commanded Cunard's Mauretania as a hospital ship in the Mediterranean and a troop transport in the Atlantic. As her longest-serving master he commanded that legendary vessel in transatlantic passenger service through most of the 1920s. Rostron retired in 1931 as the most esteemed master mariner of his era, celebrated for the Titanic rescue, decorated for his war service, and knighted for his contributions to British seafaring.

This account uses newspaper reports, company records, government documents, contemporary publications and memoirs to recount Rostron's seafaring life from his first voyage as an apprentice rounding Cape Horn in sail to his retirement forty-four years later as commodore of the Cunard Line. Set within the context of his times and featuring particulars of the ships in which he served and commanded, this is the first comprehensive biography of Arthur Rostron before, during and after his year as captain of the Carpathia.

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