



Spirit of the Titanic

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Samuel Joseph Scott died at the age of 15 in 1910, while working on the building of the *Titanic*, and Nicola Pierce has used his ghost, who resides on the ship, to tell the story of the fateful first voyage. Several real figures are used as well as many the author has created, and this familiar story does not fail to grip the reader. Sam sees in Jim and Isobel's family the warmth and love he feels he was denied by his mother who was unable to deal with her grief when his father drowned at sea. He is able to lead them to safety, Isobel and her children in one of the lifeboats, and Jim to be rescued while in the water. Sam's own (fictitious) family background adds another layer of poignancy to the rescue of Jim's family ? also fictitious.

The story does start a little falteringly but once into its stride cannot fail to move with its concentration on some of the 2,000 passengers and crew; the baker who rescues a spider from the water and keeps it in his tobacco tin, the telegraph boys who stay at their post almost until the last, and the lookout who failed to spot the iceberg until the very last minute and who, according to the notes at the end of the story, did not come to terms with that failure throughout his life. These notes make the story even more alive, as they tell of the lives, after the rescue, of several of the real life characters in the story.

I would not mind betting that readers in Northern Ireland having read this story, will make their way to Belfast City Cemetery to see the unmarked grave of one Samuel Joseph Scott, which is part of the official tour. A ghostly Sam is on the cover of 'his' story.

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