

COUNTRESS PASOLINI JUST MISSED DEATH

**American Woman's Stateroom
Was Just Below That in Which
W. J. Mooney Was Killed.**

CALMNESS DURING RESCUE

**The Women and Children Behave
Splendidly, She Says, and the
Crew Did Good Work.**

Installed in her cozy suite at the Hotel Wolcott, 4 West Thirty-first Street, the Countess Pasolini, who was Miss Mildred Montague of Chattanooga, Tenn., told a *TIMES* reporter last night her story of the last sixty hours as a survivor of the lost steamer Republic. She had a most miraculous escape. Her stateroom was situated directly beneath that occupied by W. J. Mooney of Langdon, N. D., who was killed.

Countess Pasolini had been spending Christmas with her relatives and friends in Chattanooga, and was returning to her home in Rome. With her was her cousin, Count Rasponi of Florence, who occupied a stateroom but a few removed from his relative. He, too, was unhurt. Dwight P. Montague, father of the Countess, was at the pier yesterday to meet his daughter, and last night both of them were kept busy receiving the congratulations of their many friends at the Countess's escape.

"It was, I think, about 5:30 o'clock on Saturday morning," said the Countess, "that I was awakened by the flare from a green light pouring in through my cabin window. I had forgotten to draw the curtains when I retired. The next moment I heard a tremendous crash. It seemed to be right above me. I knew something unusual had happened, and got out of bed and turned on the electric light. No sooner had I done so than the light went out.

"Following the crash, all the bottles I had on my dressing table fell to the floor. Hastily seizing a jacket I opened the door. Everything seemed perfectly quiet, and the corridors were in darkness. Then I heard the scurrying of feet and women's voices asking, 'What's happening?' A voice—which I afterward learned was that of a stewardess—calmly replied that there had been an accident, but that there was no danger.

"Everything was quite orderly in our walk to the saloon deck. Of course, there was excitement, but all kept their presence of mind.

"By this time some one had found some candles, which were lighted and helped us considerably. Most of us were scantily clad and in our bare feet. After I had been on the deck a little while I was joined by Count Rasponi. He was wearing only his pajamas. It was very cold, but we did not seem to feel it at first.

"We stayed about an hour on the deck in our light clothing, during which time the officers went about reassuring the passengers and handing out life preservers, which we all put on. It was then that we began to notice the cold. Many of us had by this time gained a sufficient feeling of security, to think about supplementing our outfit."

"Down we went to our cabins again, and I got a jacket and skirt and a pair of shoes. The Count got a suit and a pair of shoes, but no stockings. Then we returned to the deck and had another two-hour wait. We were told that assistance was at hand, and the boats were all got ready for lowering. Capt. Sealby told us we were going on board the Florida, and, although we could not see her, the transfer began, with the women and children as the first thought. Those women having children were looked after first.

"We went down the side ladder of the Republic, and found the small boats waiting for us. It was quite a little jump from the ladder into the boats—as the latter were tossing about on the waves. But sailors looked after us, and we were got in safely. I saw one woman with a small baby in her arms walk down the ladder without flinching. She showed wonderful courage as she leaped into the small boat.

"We soon got alongside the Florida. On board they treated us royally. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon we heard the Baltic's whistle. We knew we were to be put on board her. But for the time we were disappointed, as they lost us. Later in the day the fog lifted, and then we saw the Baltic. We were all very pleased. Then presently the retransferring to that ship began. I saw no disorder in the work, but it was a little more perilous because of the fairly rough sea.

"I want to say that the women and children behaved splendidly. They kept their heads all through the excitement—and there was plenty of that—and did just what they were told to do."

Seeing that the Countess Pasolini's cabin was directly beneath those which were destroyed by the bow of the Florida her escape was considered remarkable. The explanation probably is that the bow of the Florida slanted to such an extent that, whereas it caught the upper part of the Republic, the lower part of the vessel was saved by the slant. Countess Pasolini seemed none the worse for her experience, and said that she would return home to Italy in about a week, "by the biggest steamer I can find," she laughingly added.