ONE OF THE MOST LEGENDARY STORIES OF ALL TIME, RE-TOLD IN A DRAMATIC NEW LIGHT ON THE EVE OF THE CENTENARY OF THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC

How to Survive the Titanic
or
The Sinking of J. Bruce Ismay

by Frances Wilson

Published in hardback and ebook by Bloomsbury
15th August 2011, £18.99
The story of a man despised throughout history by acclaimed biographer Frances Wilson who has had unique access to the previously unseen Ismay family archive.

*How to Survive the Titanic* brings you up-close and personal with the life and times of ‘The Most Talked of Man in the world’, J.Bruce Ismay, the owner of the Titanic, who sailed to safety with the women and children, while thousands of other men prepared to die in a sinking ship on that fateful day in April 1912.

History remembers him as a villain but with never-before-seen letters to the beautiful Marian Thayer, a first-class passenger with whom he had fallen in love during the voyage, Wilson takes the reader on a new journey into the heart of one of the world’s most misjudged men. Accused of cowardice and of dictating the Titanic’s excessive speed, he became a victim of a press hate campaign. His reputation never recovered and Ismay never spoke of the Titanic again.

With the help of that great narrator of the sea, Joseph Conrad, whose *Lord Jim* so uncannily predicted Ismay’s fate – and whose manuscript of the story of a man who impulsively betrays a code of honour and lives on under the strain of intolerable guilt went down with the *Titanic* – Frances Wilson explores the reasons behind Ismay’s jump, his desperate need to make sense of the horror of it all, and to find a way of living with lost honour.

For those who survived the *Titanic* the world was never the same again. But as Wilson superbly demonstrates, we all have our own *Titanics*, and we all need to find ways of surviving them.

**Praise for Frances Wilson**

‘A wonderful biography … witty and sharp’ *Spectator* (for *The Courtesan*)

‘Passion is the keynote of Wilson’s fine biography’ *Sunday Times* (for *The Ballad of Dorothy Wordsworth*)

Frances Wilson is a critic, journalist and the author of three works of non-fiction, *Literary Seductions, The Courtesan’s Revenge* and *The Ballad of Dorothy Wordsworth*, which won the Rose Mary Crawshay Prize in 2009. She has an outstanding reputation as a critic and literary thinker and was a judge for the Whitbread Prize in 2006 and the Man Booker Prize in 2010. Frances Wilson lives in London with her daughter.

For more information/interview or article requests, please contact: Katie Bond: 020 7494 6012, katie.bond@bloomsbury.com  
www.bloomsbury.com/franceswilson