

Jacques Futrelle

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Jacques Futrelle



Born: April 9, 1875
Pike County, Georgia

Died: April 15, 1912 (aged 37)
Atlantic Ocean, aboard the RMS
Titanic

Occupation: Mystery writer, journalist

Nationality: American

**Writing
period:** 1905 - 1912

Genres: Detective fiction

Debut works: "Thinking Machine" story: "The Problem of Cell 13" (1905)

Website: futrelle.com

Jacques Heath Futrelle (April 9, 1875 - April 15, 1912) was an American journalist and mystery writer. He is best known for writing short detective stories featuring the "Thinking Machine", Professor Augustus S. F. X. Van Dusen.

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Career

Futrelle, who was born in Pike County, Georgia, worked for the *Atlanta Journal*, where he began their sports section; the *New York Herald*; the *Boston Post*; and the *Boston American*, where, in 1905, his Thinking Machine character first appeared in a serialized version of "The Problem

of Cell 13". In 1895, he married fellow writer Lily May Peel, with whom he had two children, Virginia and Jacques "John" Jr.

Futrelle left the *Boston American* in 1906 to focus his attention on writing novels. He had a house built in Scituate, Massachusetts, which he called "Stepping Stones", and spent most of his time there until his death in 1912.

Returning from Europe aboard the RMS *Titanic*, Futrelle, a first-cabin passenger, refused to board a lifeboat insisting his wife board instead, according to his wife, with the belief that her boarding would give him a better chance of surviving; he perished in the Atlantic. On 29 July 1912 his mother, Linnie Futrelle, died in her Georgia home; her death was attributed to grief over her son's death.

Futrelle is used as the protagonist in *The Titanic Murders*, a novel about two murders aboard the *Titanic*, by Max Allan Collins.

Selected works

Novels

- *The Chase of the Golden Plate* (1906)
- *The Simple Case of Susan* (1908)
- *The Thinking Machine on the Case* (1908)
- *The Diamond Master* (1909)
- *Elusive Isabel* (1909)
- *The High Hand* (1911)
- *My Lady's Garter* (1912)
- *Blind Man's Bluff* (1914)

Stories

- "The House That Was" (a literary experiment with his wife, in which The Thinking Machine provided a rational solution to the seemingly impossible and supernatural events of a ghost story written by May)
- "The Phantom Motor"
- "The Problem of Cell 13" (1907)
- Various other short stories (see Augustus S. F. X. Van Dusen for more)

References

- "Futrelle Refused to Enter Lifeboat". *The New York Times*. 19 April 1912: 6.
- "Futrelle's Mother is Dead". *The New York Times*. 30 July 1912: 1.

- "Jacques Futrelle". *Contemporary Authors*. 2000. Gale Group Databases. 1 August 2003 <<http://www.infotrac.galegroup.com>>.
- "Says Ismay Ruled in Titanic's Boats." *The New York Times*. 26 June 1915: 6.

External links

- Jacques Futrelle Official Homepage
- Entry at *Encyclopedia Titanica*
- Works by Jacques Futrelle at Project Gutenberg

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Categories: American mystery writers | American novelists | American journalists | Titanic's crew and passengers | Georgia (U.S. state) writers | Massachusetts writers | People from Georgia (U.S. state) | People from Massachusetts | 1875 births | 1912 deaths

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