

HISTORY MYSTERY

TITANIC: THE 'UNSYNKABLE' SHIP



Take a look at the picture above: this rusted shipwreck is resting on the bottom of the ocean almost 4,000 meters below the surface. It is covered in barnacles and sand. It has many holes and pieces missing. Would you believe that this ruined artifact was once thought to be the greatest ship of all time? This is what is left of the RMS Titanic, a gigantic and expensive ship that was said to be “unsinkable”.

People watched from all over the world as the ship set sail for the first time on April 14th, 1912. Everyone, including the crew, passengers, and spectators was so excited to see this huge, beautiful ship sailing through the ocean. Many people saved all of their money to afford a ticket onboard.

Yet only one day later, on April 15th, 1912 the voyage ended in tragedy. The Titanic sank, and over 1000 of the passengers on board did not survive. Even today, people are fascinated by the Titanic tragedy.

But what caused the Titanic to sink? Was it merely an unavoidable accident? Or is there someone, or something, to blame for this infamous moment in history?

It is your job to read eye-witness accounts, examine photo evidence, and explore theories so that you can solve this HISTORY MYSTERY!

EVIDENCE C: NEWSPAPER AD FOR THE TITANIC



Image: an advertisement for the maiden (first) voyage of the Titanic.

Many people were so amazed by this ship that they rushed out to buy tickets, or saved up money to afford tickets on the "largest and safest" boat!

EVIDENCE D: TICKETS FOR THE TITANIC



Image: a replica (copy) of the tickets you would need to board the Titanic. Passengers could buy either First Class, Second Class, or Third Class tickets.

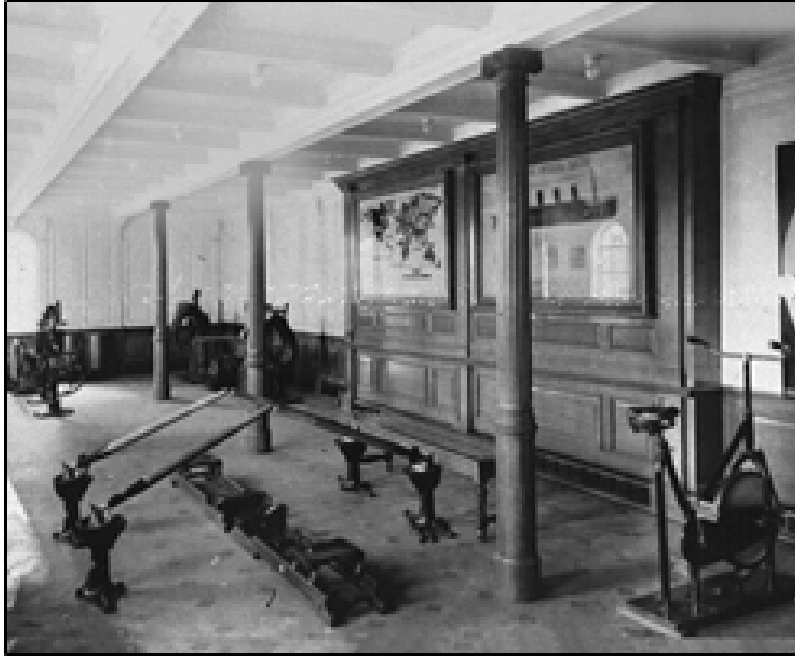
Look at the back of this sheet for ticket prices and the number of tickets sold.

	<i>TICKET PRICE (estimated modern day)</i>	<i># OF TICKETS SOLD (passengers)</i>
First Class	\$1,700-\$50,00	329
Second Class	\$700-\$2,000	285
Third Class	\$170-\$500	710

First Class was the most expensive, most opulent (fancy) option and was reserved for wealthy and powerful people. They had the most privileges on the boat.

One woman, Charlotte Drake, spent \$61,000 on her ticket for a luxury suite. She brought 14 trunks full of clothing, 4 suitcases of jewelry and shoes, and 3 crates of other personal belongings. She lost all of her belongings when the Titanic sank and tried to sue the company for almost \$4 million dollars.

EVIDENCE E: FIRST CLASS PASSENGERS



*Above: The First Class deck area. Some passengers had private decks.
Below: A photo of a First Class bedroom.*



•A typical first-class suite had at least 1 luxurious bedroom, a sitting room with a fireplace, and an area to wash and get dressed.

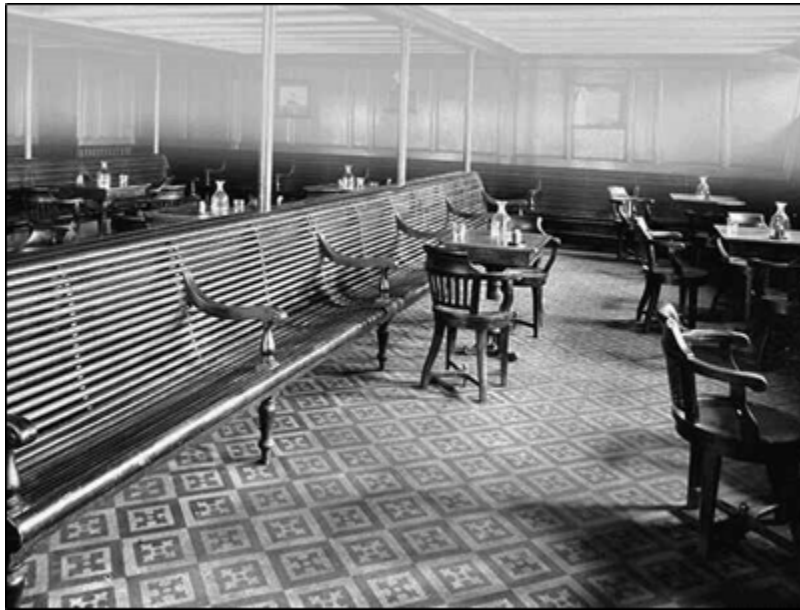
•First class passengers could go almost anywhere on the boat. Many areas were “First Class Only” (so no Second or Third class passengers were allowed).

•First class passengers often had many servants, waiters, maids, and more staff at their service all hours of the day.

•It was expected that women would wear 2-4 different expensive outfits EACH DAY on the Titanic! (one for sleeping, a ‘breakfast dress/day dress’, an outfit for lunch or entertainment, and a fancy gown and jewels for dinner).

•They ate expensive, multi-course meals that would often last for 5 hours or more! These meals included caviar, grilled meats, 2 soups and salads, lobster and seafood, fresh pastries, and cheese.

EVIDENCE F: THIRD CLASS PASSENGERS



*Above: The Third Class 'entertainment' area. People could gather here to dance and play cards.
Below: A photo of a Third Class bedroom. There are 6 bunk beds and 1 toilet in the room, plus a very small window.*



- *This class had the most passengers. Each Third Class cabin/room could have up to 10 people sleeping in it. They had small bunk-beds and usually 1 toilet in the room.*
- *Third class had only two bathtubs shared between more than 700 passengers!*
- *Third class was also called “steerage” because it was usually in the stern of the ship near the steering equipment. It could be very hot and loud!*
- *Passengers still ate 3 meals a day, but they were much less fancy foods (ex: oatmeal for breakfast, sandwiches for lunch)*
- *It was least expensive, but also the least comfortable.*
- *Third Class passengers were restricted to the lower levels of the ship.*

EVIDENCE G: HOW MANY PEOPLE SURVIVED?

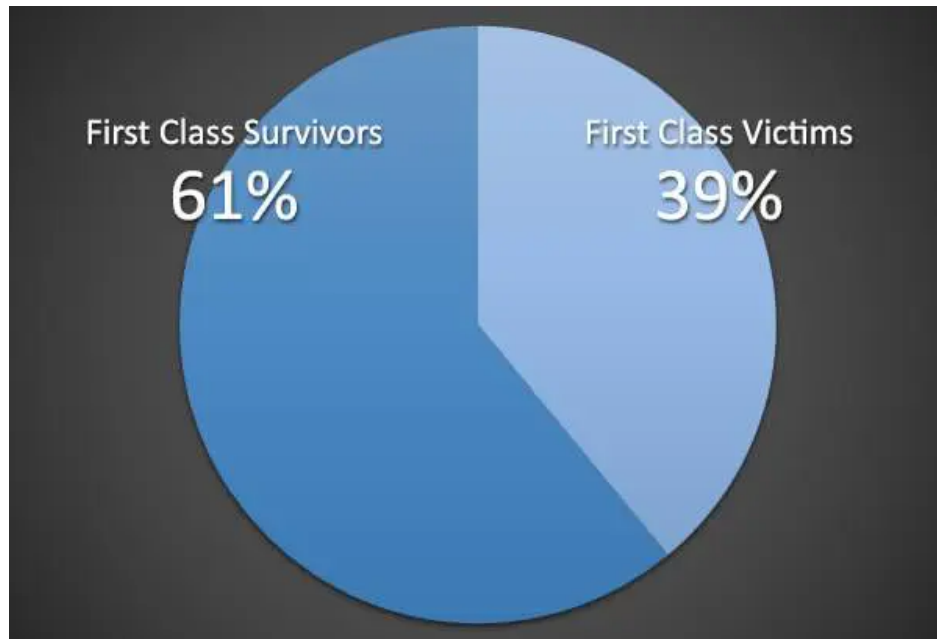


Image above: one of the 20 lifeboats from the Titanic.

There were not enough lifeboats for everyone on the ship. Women and children were supposed to get on the lifeboats first.

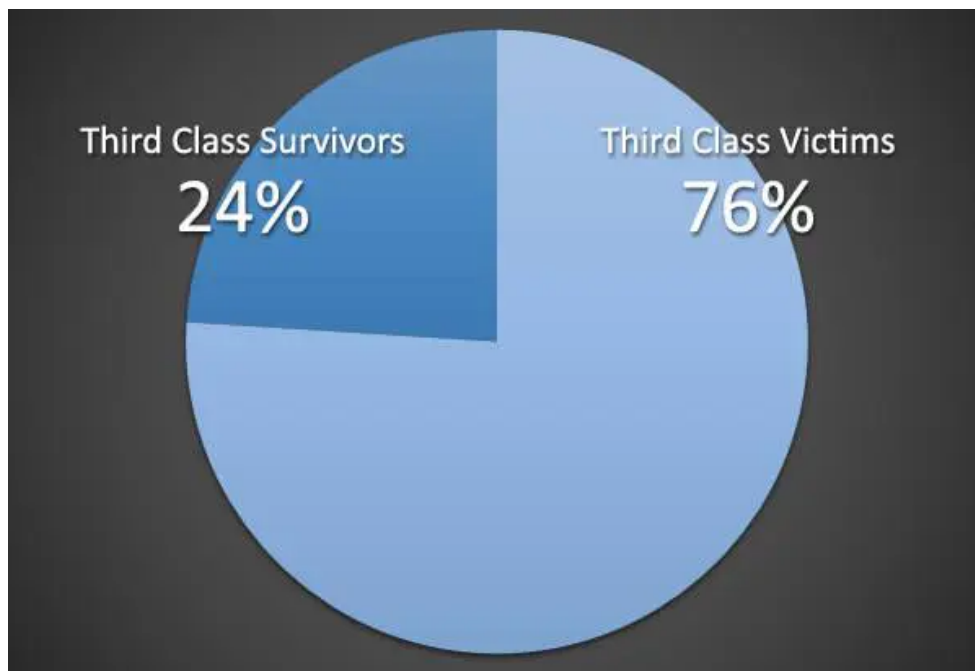
Many Third Class passengers were not able to access the lifeboats, often because they were in the lower parts of the ship. Wealthier passengers also received preferential (special) treatment when evacuating the boat.

Look at the back of the sheet to see the percentage of survivors in First and Third class.



*Above: 61% of First Class passengers survived the sinking of the ship.
Below: Only 24% of Third Class passengers survived.*

EVIDENCE H: THE BUILDING OF THE TITANIC

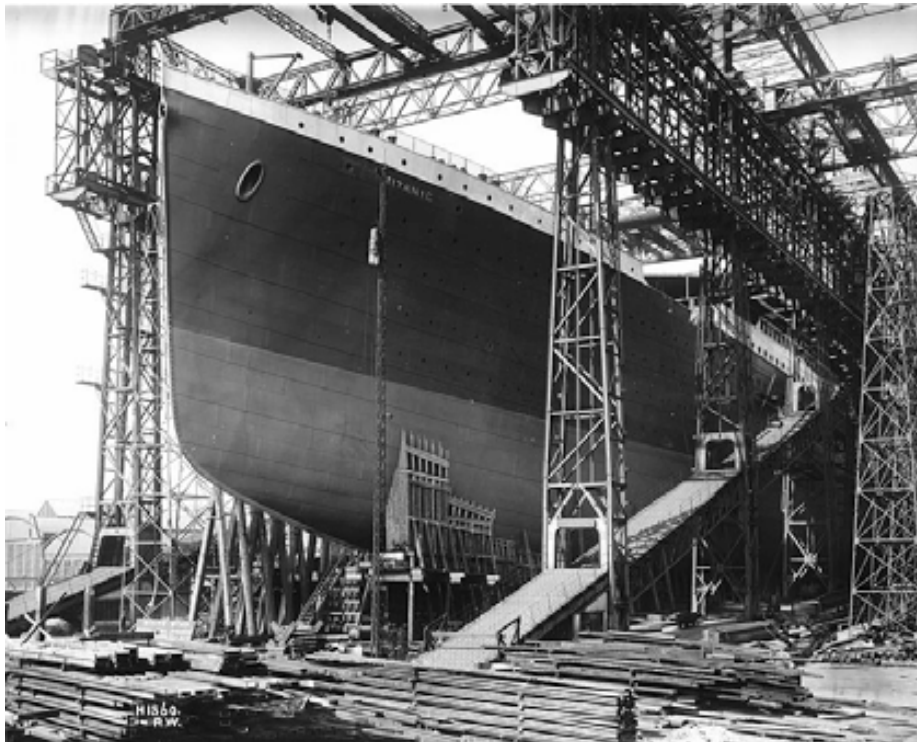


The White Star Line (a company specializing in ships) was founded in England, by John Pilkington and Henry Wilson in 1845. They had several large, successful ships built by their company including the *Oceanic*. Their company boasted that while other ships could deliver people and mail quickly, the White Star ships were efficient AND comfortable for First Class passengers and immigrants.

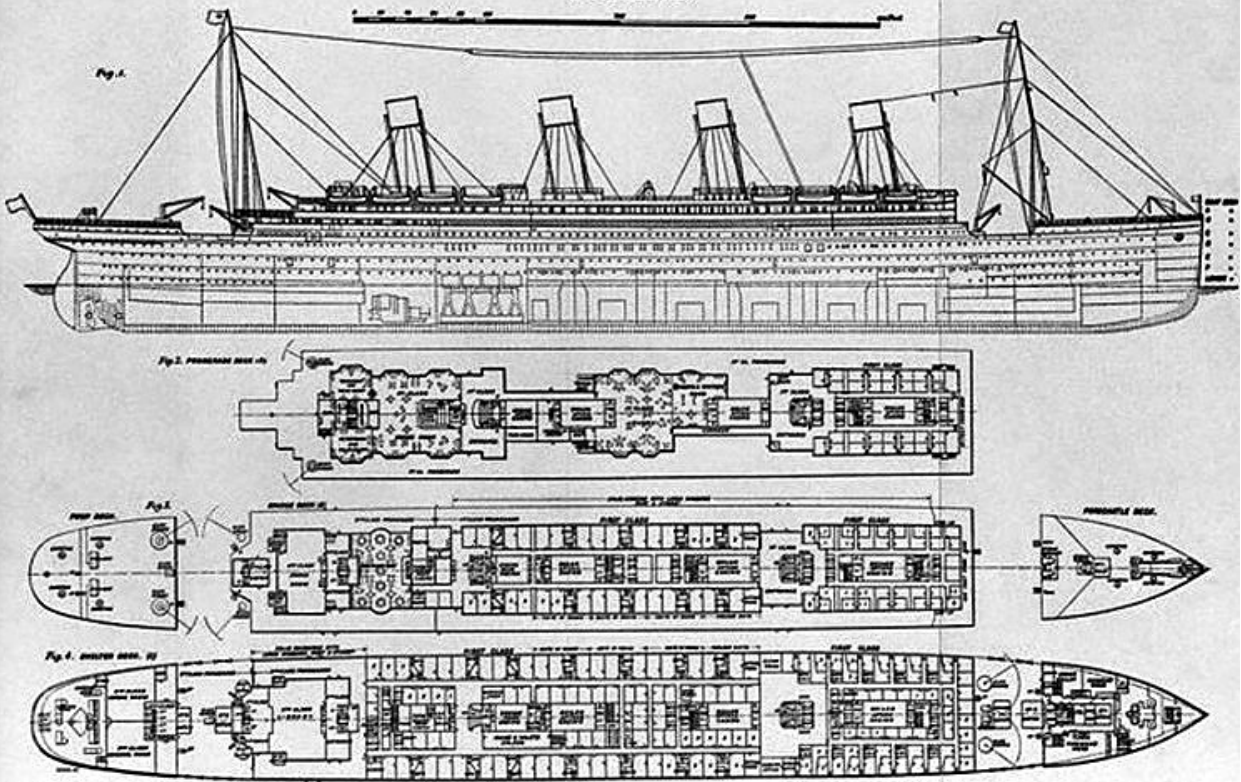
White Star Line was later bought by another man, and his son J. Bruce Ismay, became a partner in the business in 1891. Ismay will be one of the people we investigate later!

It was J. Bruce Ismay who dreamed up the RMS Titanic in April of 1907. The Titanic's design was finished in 1908 and construction of the ship began in 1909. The ship was built in Ireland. IT cost around \$123 million dollars in modern-day currency to build.

Look at the ship being built, below, and on the back of the page for the blueprints.



INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF THE "TITANIC:" LONGITUDINAL SECTION AND PLANS SHOWING BULKHEADS, MEANS OF EGRESS FROM LOWER DECKS & (For Description, see Page 88.)



EVIDENCE I: 3 MILLION RIVETS

The Titanic's hull (outside) was made in 1909 and was constructed alongside that of the Olympic (another large ship made by White Star).

The ships took over 2 years to build following a construction process which used steel welding, and required over 15,000 workers to complete. The workers were paid less than \$10 a week, and it was very dangerous work.

Steel welding was still very new at the time so the structure had to be held together with over three million iron and steel rivets which by themselves weighed over 1,200 tons. The rivets were fitted using hydraulic machines or were hammered in by hand. Some people think that the steel metal they used was not strong enough, which resulted in the Titanic sinking.



Chronicle / Michael Maloney

Above: some of the 3 million rivets used to hold the Titanic together.

But some people disagree that the ship's design was an issue. An engineer in 2018 said: "Despite the tragic disaster, the manufacturing and engineering design of the Titanic was actually flawless and a smaller or weaker ship would have sunk much faster. No engineer can compete with the forces of nature and all cruise liners and ships face the same risks even today!"

