

Titanic

This essay is going to be about the story of The Titanic, that is also historically known as the unsinkable ship. Levinson (2012) and Battles (2001) agree that over 1500 people died from the Titanic disaster. Since then, several films, books, and documentaries have been produced. The tragedy shocked the globe with the sheer number of lives lost, and the widespread belief that the ship could not sink. This essay will look at the history and the creation of the Titanic. The tragic event that become the end of the 'unsinkable ship', also the discovery and missions to the wreckage since.

The Titanic which was the largest ship ever to be built at that time, was set afloat in 1911. Famous American financier John Pierpont "JP" Morgan was a significant shareholder in the American firm that owned the British-registered White Star liner Titanic. Harland & Wolff constructed the Titanic in Belfast, Northern Ireland to carry passengers from Southampton, England to New York City across the Atlantic, it took three years to create and cost £1.5 million (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2022: Twinkl, 2023).

The Titanic set sail on the 10th of April 1912 from Southampton to New York, with 2,224 passengers on board, just four days after, 400 miles away from shore, on the 14th of April, the Titanic collided with an iceberg, tearing a hole along the front six compartments of the ship. The Titanic sank in the North Atlantic Ocean less than three hours later, in the early hours of 15th April (Pattnaik and Behera, 2021: Leighly, Bramfitt and Lawrence, 2001).

The Titanic had passengers from all levels of society separated into first, second and third class, with many immigrants on board. Those that were in third class were excited, in the hope for a better financially stable future, with the endless opportunities for work that would be available in America (The History Press, 2023).

Those that were lucky enough to afford first class had many luxuries, they were placed at the top of the ship in private suites, with a large living room and bedrooms, with walk in wardrobes and bathroom. First class also had many facilities including a gym, swimming pool, cafes, and the biggest dining area available on any ship at the time, which had a live orchestra playing background music (BBC Bitesize, 2023). The second class were on the deck below, in cabins with bunkbeds, they also had access to many facilities (BBC Bitesize 2023). Finally, the third class were placed at the bottom of the ship, near the engine rooms where it was noisy. Even though the facilities were minimal and not the best, they were a lot better than those that were offered to the third class on other boats, including the provision of food, dining area, and a room with a piano for them to play, and socialise (Wzhang, 2020).

Pruitt (2023) stated that a series of events took place resulting in the Titanic disaster. On the 14th of April, the Titanic was traveling through the icy North Atlantic Ocean, at a high speed of 22 knots. Less than an hour before the Titanic collided with the iceberg, Jack Phillips who was operating the Titanics radio, received a call off the Californian ship that was nearby, stating that they had to stop due to a thick field of ice, but as the message did not need the captain to confirm that he had received it, Jack Phillips assumed that it was not urgent and did not inform the captain. Pruitt (2023) also states that the lookouts for the Titanic were unable to use the binoculars on the ship, as David Blair, the officer in possession of the keys to gain access to the stored binoculars, got off the boat before it left Southampton, forgetting to leave them with the officer on duty.

Even if the Titanic disaster could not have been prevented, the amount of people that lost their lives could have been reduced. The Titanic was not prepared for such an event. Gleicher and Stevans (2004) agree that the ship was not equipped with enough boats for everyone to board, so inevitably many people were going to die. The boats that were available, were not filled to their maximum capacity, many more could have boarded them and been saved. Women and children were prioritised to have access to the boats, but through the lack of organisation, the ones in third class found it hard to get up to the first-class decks, where the boats were, as they did not receive any help to

find their way through the confusing structured corridors. Many became stuck amongst the men that were restricted from getting to the deck with the lifeboats, and were made to wait for further instructions, until it became too late (Gleicher and Stevans, 2004).

The Titanic lay undiscovered at the bottom of the ocean for 73 years. On September 1st, 1985, with the advances of technology, and preparation that took two years. A team of French and Americans discovered the ship two months into their expedition, 3800 m down on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean (Michel and Ballard, 1994). Since the famous shipwreck was located there have been many visits to the site, with people paying thousands for the experience (Yang, 2023). Yang (2023) states that the RMS Titanic Inc. Company have recovered more than 5,000 items from the wreckage which they have auctioned off. In June 2023, the last manned mission to the titanic took place. Five passengers on board the OceanGate sub, set off for their mission. After just one hour and 45 minutes later all communication to the sub had cut off. The sub never resurvived. Five days the rescue mission lasted, when debris from the sub was discovered and the passengers were pronounced dead (Reuters, 2023).

The information above shows that the Titanic, the largest ship that had ever been built in 1911, was a luxurious ship even for third-class standards at the time. It concludes that for many it was a hope for a new and better life. It is now known globally as the unsinkable ship that sank, with thousand onboard and less than half of them surviving. The research states there were many mistakes made that could have prevented such a mass number of fatalities. The wreck was only discovered some years later when technology made it possible. The wreckage has been visited many times by numerous people. Some to explore, some to salvage and some to have the unique experience. Evident from the information in this essay, the journey to the Titanic wreck is dangerous and has cost some people their lives.

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