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Titanic

Lloyd's Register was not requested by White Star Line to survey the *Titanic* to ensure the vessel's seaworthiness, hence she was not classed and we have relatively little original information on her. The vessel did, however, appear in the 1912-1913 edition of the *Lloyd's Register of Ships*, wherein the following details are recorded:

Builder: Harland & Wolff Ltd
Date of build: 1912
Place of build: Belfast
Owner: Oceanic Steam Navigation Company (White Star Line)
Managers: Ismay, Imrie & Co. Ltd.
Port of registry: Liverpool
Flag: British
Official number: 131428
Call sign: HVMP
Tonnages: Gross 46,329
 Net 21,831
 Underdeck 35,043
Dimensions: Length 852.5'
 Breadth 92.5'
 Depth 59.5'
Master: Capt. E J Smith

Brief reference is made to the *Titanic's* demise in Lloyd's Register's *Casualty Returns*, where it is stated that she "struck an iceberg and sank in lat. 41.16N., long. 50.14 W." on April 14, 1912.

Information from other sources

The official records held at The National Archives, Kew, and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Belfast, tell more of *Titanic's* story. For example, we are told that the *Titanic* cost £1.5million to build and that she was intended to run White Star Line's passenger service from Southampton to New York.

She was assigned the title Royal Mail Steamer (RMS) as she was to carry transatlantic mail for Royal Mail.(i)

Titanic was designed by Thomas Andrews. The largest passenger steamer of her day, the vessel was believed to be "practically unsinkable". She was divided into 16 watertight compartments by 15 transverse bulkheads extending above the waterline. The Captain operated her watertight doors from the bridge "by simply moving an electrical switch".(ii)

As a luxury liner, *Titanic* boasted the latest technology and sumptuous accommodation - for first class passengers - including a swimming pool, Palm Courts, a Turkish bath and a gymnasium. Her passengers ranged from the world's richest citizens to some of its poorest, with many emigrating to new lives in America. The passenger list for *Titanic's* one and only voyage is available from The National Archives. A full passenger list is also included within the appendices of Eaton & Haas' *Titanic: Triumph and Tragedy* and Debbie Beavis, *Who Sailed on the Titanic? The Definitive Passenger Lists*.(iii)

The *Titanic's* fatal voyage began at Southampton. She departed at 12:15pm on Wednesday April 10, 1912 calling at Cherbourg, France, to collect wealthy American and Canadian tourists, who had been visiting Paris, as well as some emigrants from Europe and the Middle East. At 8:10pm she left Cherbourg for Queenstown, Ireland (now Cobh) arriving at 11:30am on April 11.

Here many Irish emigrants boarded, presumably seeking a new and prosperous life in America. *Titanic* left Queenstown at 1:30pm, but never reached her final destination. At 11:40pm on April 14, 1912, she struck an iceberg in or near latitude 41.16N, longitude 50.14 W, North Atlantic Ocean. She sustained extensive damage to her hull, seawater flooded her four forward compartments as well as two forward boiler rooms. She had flooded to a depth of 15 feet within ten minutes. By 12:02am on April 15, the squash court, 32 feet above the keel, was awash and the Captain ordered the standard CQD distress call to be sent. The SOS signal had superseded the CQD signal in 1908 but the latter was still widely used.

The radio operator, John George ‘Jack’ Phillips, at the suggestion of his fellow radio operator Harold Bride, decided to try the SOS signal. By 2:20am on April 15, however, *Titanic* finally sank to the seabed. The steamship *Carpathia* intercepted the distress calls at 12:25am and arrived some four hours later to offer assistance.(1) She managed to save 705 men, women and children from the lifeboats of *Titanic*.

Official statistics

Total on board: 2,228

Total passengers: 1,343

Total crew: 885

Total saved: 705

Total drowned: 1,523^{iv}

Analysis of those saved from the official Report on the Loss of the “Titanic” (S.S.).(v)

Passengers:

1st Class: 199 (out of 325 - 60%)

2nd Class: 119 (out of 285 - 42%)

3rd Class: 174 (out of 706 - 25%)

Crew: 212 (out of 885 -23.95%)

These figures do not, however, match later counts, which show the number of passengers to be 2,228, not 2,201.

The death registers of the *Titanic*, which are from the archive of the Registry of Shipping & Seamen, are at the National Archives, Kew, under the Board of Trade class references **BT 334/52 and BT 334/53**.

As a result of the tragedy and in response to the findings of the Mersey Committee (set up to investigate the loss), the British Government initiated the first International Conference on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS). Conference members met in London in 1913 and 1914. Thirteen nations reached an agreement on watertight and fire-resisting bulkheads, life saving appliances, fire prevention and fire fighting appliances on passenger ships, which were adopted in 1914. Measures were to come into force in July 1915, but due to the outbreak of the First World War, they did not. However, many countries adopted the provisions set out. There was also a general acceptance of the principle of the provision of lifeboat places for everyone on board ocean-going passenger ships.(vi)

It is mentioned in the opening paragraph of this information sheet, that Lloyd’s Register did not class the *Titanic*. Press articles of the period had reported that the vessel had been built considerably in excess of the requirements of Lloyd’s Register. This was not the case and Lloyd’s Register’s Secretary, Andrew Scott, wrote a letter to *The Times*, which was duly published on July 8, 1912 (see next page).

(1) *Carpathia* was a 13,603 grt passenger liner, owned by Cunard Line. She was built in 1902 by Swan Hunter at Newcastle and had capacity for 204 first class and 1,500 third class passengers. Unlike *Titanic*, she was classed by Lloyd’s Register ✕100 A1.

THE TIMES, MONDAY, JULY 8, 1912.

LLOYD'S REGISTER AND THE TITANIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In view of the reports which have appeared in the Press in connexion with the inquiry into the loss of the S.S. Titanic, to the effect that the vessel was built considerably in excess of the requirements of Lloyd's Register, I am directed to say that these statements are inaccurate. On the contrary, in important parts of her structure the vessel as built did not come up to the requirements of Lloyd's Register for a vessel of her dimensions.

I do not for a moment suggest that this circumstance had any bearing whatever upon the loss of the vessel, and therefore, for obvious reasons, this letter has been delayed until after the close of the Inquiry. But, in justice to this society and to those who rely upon its classification, it is felt to be only right to dispel the erroneous impression which might be created regarding the standard of classification of Lloyd's Register for such vessels if the statements referred to remained uncontradicted.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
A. SCOTT, Secretary,
Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping,
71, Fenchurch-street, E.C., July 5.

[*It will be remembered that, writing in connexion with the loss of the Titanic as long ago as May 17, our Marine Insurance Correspondent called attention to the advantage of an independent survey of new ships by such a body as Lloyd's Register, and suggested that one of the questions which deserved consideration was whether the Board of Trade had sufficient organization and equipment for testing the plans of vessels not built under the survey of registration societies. The question does not appear to have been fully investigated by the Court appointed to inquire into the loss of the Titanic, though the principle of an independent survey is undoubtedly one of great importance.]

Although the vessel itself was not classed, Lloyd's Register did approve her anchors, which to this day remain intact on the seabed.

Sources for further information:

Titanic Historical Society Inc.

PO Box 51053
208 Main Street
India Orchard
Massachusetts
01151-0053
USA

✉ titanicinfo@titanichistoricalsociety.org
🌐 [Website](#)

Titanic International Society, Inc.

Charles Haas
PO Box 416
Midland Park
New Jersey 07432-0416
USA

🌐 [Website](#)

Harland & Wolff Ltd.

Queen's Island
Belfast
BT3 9DU
Northern Ireland

🌐 [Website](#)

Cunard Line Ltd.

Mountbatten House
Grosvenor Square
Southampton
SO15 2BF

🌐 [Website](#)

The National Archives

Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Surrey
TW9 4DU

📞 +44 (0)20 8876 3444

🌐 [Website](#)

British Library Newspaper Library

Colindale Avenue
Colindale
London
NW9 5HE

📞 +44 (0)20 7412 7353

🌐 [Website](#)

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Some websites:

“Official Titanic Website”

www.titanic.com

Encyclopaedia Titanica

www.encyclopedia-titanica.org

Further Reading:

The Deathless Story of the Titanic

Lloyd’s of London Press

The Discovery of the Titanic

Dr. Robert D. Ballard

Who Sailed on the Titanic? The Definitive Passenger Lists

Debbie Beavis (Ian Allen Publishing, Surrey: 2002)

Loss of the SS Titanic

L Beesley (William Heineman: 1912)

The Titanic; the full story of a tragedy

M Davie (Bodley Head: 1986)

Titanic Triumph and Tragedy. A Chronicle in Words and Pictures

J Eaton and C Haas (Haynes Publishing, Third Edition: 2001)

- Includes passenger list

Titanic - Destination Disaster - The Legends and the Reality

J Eaton and C Haas (Haynes Publishing, third edition: 2011)

Titanic - A Survivor’s Story Colonel Archibald Gracie (Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd: 1985)

A Titanic Myth

L Harrison (William Kimber: 1986)

Passenger Liners of the World - Vol 1: 1858-1912

A. Kludas (Patrick Stephens Ltd: 1975)

Titanic and Other Ships

Cdr Charles Lightoller (Ivor Nicholson and Watson: 1935)

A Night to Remember

Walter Lord (Penguin: 1976)

Titanic - An Illustrated History

D Lynch and K Marshall (Hodder & Stoughton: 1992)

The Maiden Voyage

G Marcus (Allen and Unwin: 1969)

Titanic

M McCaughan (Ulster Folk and Transport Museum: 1982)

The Titanic and the Californian

P Padfield (Hodder & Stoughton: 1965)

Lights - the Odyssey of Charles Lightoller

P Stenson (The Bodley Head: 1984)

The Titanic - End of a Dream

W C Wade (Weidenfeld & Nicholson: 1980)

(i) Public Record Office (PRO) *TITANIC: April 14th-15th, 1912. The Official Story*

(ii) *TITANIC: April 14th-15th, 1912. The Official Story (as above)*

(iii) Beavis, D, *Who Sailed on the Titanic? The Definitive Passenger Lists* (Surrey, 2002)

(iv) Eaton, JP & Haas, CA (as above), p179.

(v) Cd 6352: *Shipping Casualties (Loss of the Steamship “Titanic”, HMSO 1912.*

(vi) Eaton, JP & Haas, CA (as above), p330.

Researchers should check availability, accessibility and opening times with the repositories listed before making a personal visit.

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