

# The Titanic

*RMS Titanic* was a British passenger liner that sank in the North Atlantic Ocean in the early morning of 15 April 1912 after colliding with an iceberg during her maiden voyage from Southampton, UK, to New York City, US. The sinking resulted in the deaths of more than 1,500 passengers and crew, making it one of the deadliest commercial peacetime maritime disasters in modern history. The *RMS Titanic*, the largest ship afloat at the time it entered service, was the second of three Olympic class ocean liners operated by the White Star Line, and was built by the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast with Thomas Andrews as her naval architect. Andrews was among those who died in the sinking. On her maiden voyage, she carried 2,224 passengers and crew.

Under the command of Edward Smith, the ship's passengers included some of the wealthiest people in the world, as well as hundreds of emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland, Scandinavia and elsewhere throughout Europe seeking a new life in North America. A high-power radiotelegraph transmitter was available for sending passenger "marconigrams" and for the ship's operational use. Although *Titanic* had advanced safety features such as watertight compartments and remotely activated watertight doors, there were not enough lifeboats to accommodate all of those aboard due to outdated maritime safety regulations. *Titanic* only carried enough lifeboats for 1,178 people—slightly more than half of the number on board, and one-third her total capacity.

After leaving Southampton on 10 April 1912, *Titanic* called at Cherbourg in France and Queenstown in Ireland before heading west to New York. On 14 April 1912, four days into the crossing and about 375 miles south of Newfoundland, she hit an iceberg at 11:40 p.m. ship's time. The collision caused the ship's hull plates to buckle inwards along her starboard side and opened five of her sixteen watertight compartments to the sea; the ship gradually filled with water. Meanwhile, passengers and some crew members were evacuated in lifeboats, many of which were launched only partly loaded. A disproportionate number of men were left aboard because of a "women and children first" protocol followed by some of the officers loading the lifeboats. By 2:20 a.m., she broke apart and foundered, with well over one thousand people still aboard. Just under two hours after *Titanic* foundered, the Cunard liner *RMS Carpathia* arrived on the scene of the sinking, where she brought aboard an estimated 705 survivors.

The disaster was greeted with worldwide shock and outrage at the huge loss

*This matchbox is a replica of the actual matchboxes that were used aboard the RMS Titanic when she made her fateful maiden voyage in April of 1912.*



*They were produced for and distributed by the White Star Line Memorial Foundation, USA. The matchcover is a reproduction of the Diamond Quality matchcovers that were used her White Star Line sister ships in the years that followed. They were produced by Michael Zinke, a ship line collector from Germany, who has been collecting Titanic items for over 20 years and has a very large collection. He notes that it was not unusual for matchcovers to be produced in the United States to be used aboard these English ships since White Star Line's mother company was from the United States.*



of life and the regulatory and operational failures that had led to it. Public inquiries in Britain and the United States led to major improvements in maritime safety. One of their most important legacies was the establishment in 1914 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, which still governs maritime safety today. Additionally, several new wireless regulations were passed around the world in an effort to learn from the many missteps in wireless communications—which could have saved many more passengers.

The wreck of *Titanic* remains on the seabed, split in two and gradually disintegrating at a depth of 12,415 feet. Since her discovery in 1985, thousands of artifacts have been recovered and put on display at museums around the world. *Titanic* has become one of the most famous ships in history, her memory kept alive by numerous books, folk songs, films, exhibits, and memorials.

In January 1912, the hulls and equipment of *Titanic* and *Olympic* had been insured through Lloyd's of London. The total coverage was £1,000,000 (£88,424,710 today) per ship. The policy was to be "free from all average" under £150,000, meaning that the insurers would only pay for damage in excess of that sum. The premium, negotiated by brokers Willis Faber & Company (now Willis Group), was 15 s (75 p) per £100, or £7,500 (£663,185 today) for the term of one year. Lloyd's paid the White Star Line the full sum owed to them within 30 days.

Many charities were set up to help the victims and their families, many of whom lost their sole breadwinner, or, in the case of many Third Class survivors, everything they owned. On 29 April, opera stars Enrico Caruso and Mary Garden and members of the Metropolitan Opera raised \$12,000 (\$292,682.93 in 2014) in benefits for victims of the disaster by giving special concerts in which versions of "Autumn" and "Nearer My God To Thee" were part of the program. In Britain, relief funds were organized for the families of *Titanic*'s lost crew members, raising nearly £450,000 (£39,791,120 today). One such fund was still in operation as late as the 1960s. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RMS\\_Titanic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RMS_Titanic)]



*There was much confusion after initial reports of the tragedy. Some papers reported that there were no*