

The R.M.S. Titanic

During the early part of the 20th century European nationalism and faith in technology manifested itself in the construction of massive Ocean Liners. The RMS Titanic was launched in 1911 and was the largest ship afloat at the time (a symbol of British domination of the seas). On April 10th, 1912, the Titanic left Southampton for her maiden voyage across the Atlantic.

Due to her size, and the faith placed in technology at the time, the ship was deemed by the press to be "practically unsinkable."

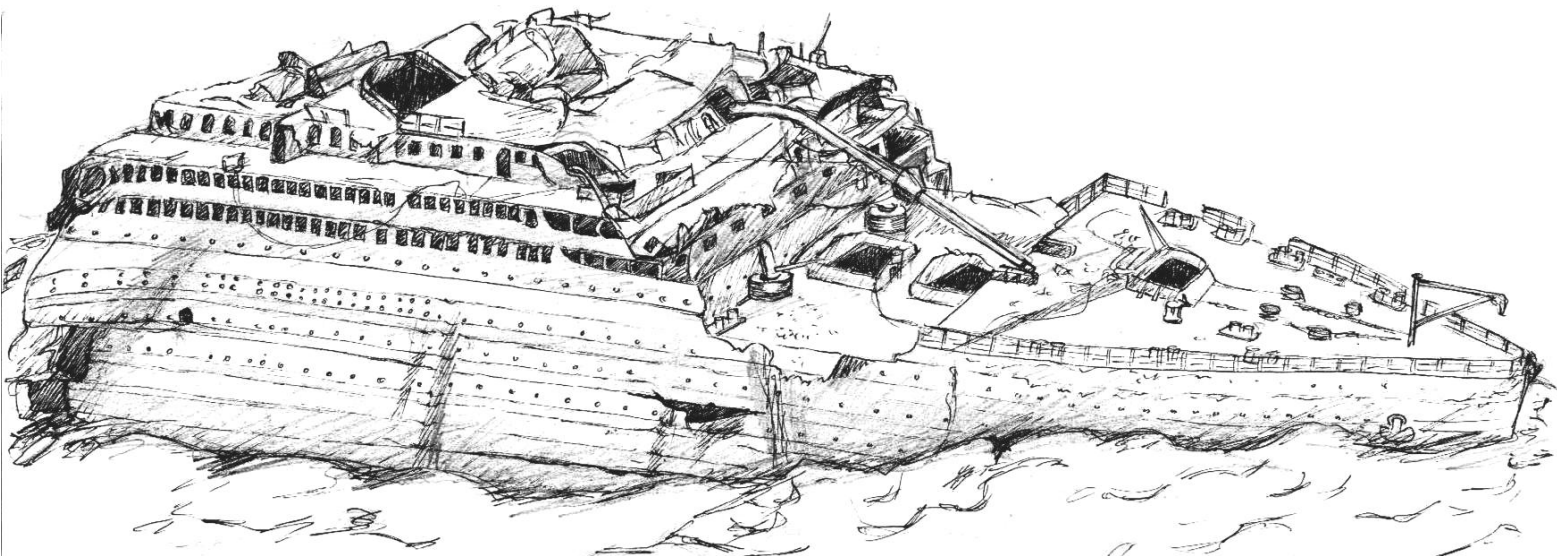
Colliding with an iceberg on April 15th, 1912, the ship sank 2 hours and 40 minutes later. The wreck is located 2.5 miles under water.

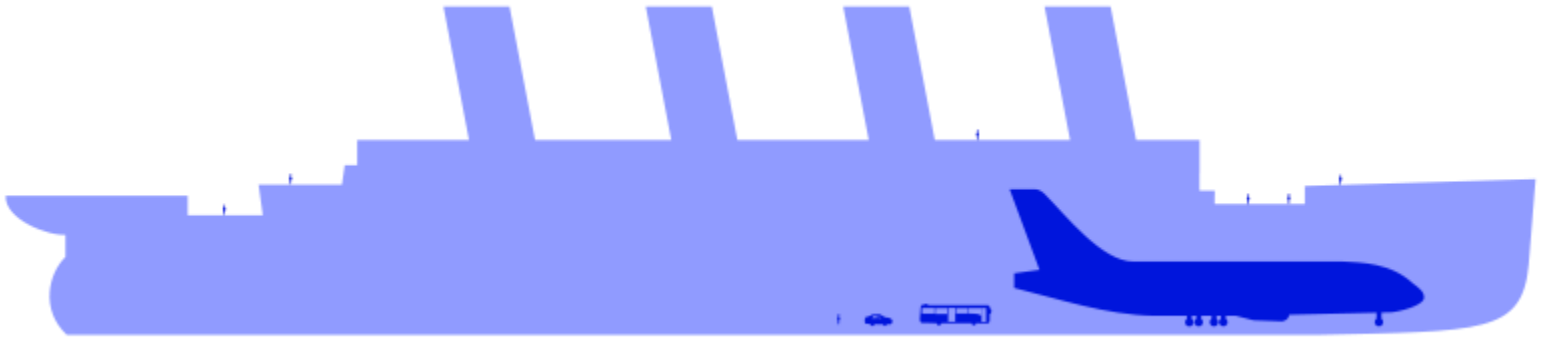


While the general consensus as to why Titanic sank is: "the Ship hit an iceberg;" in fact, the sinking resulted from a whole series of circumstances. Factors that lead to the sinking of the Titanic include: the speed and angle of the impact into the iceberg, the temperature of the water, the quality and makeup of the steel hull and rivets in 1912; the unusual position of the ice field during that period, the number and placement of the punctures in the six forward compartments, and the awareness of the crew. While Titanic did hit an iceberg, if it were not for the events leading to and resulting from the actual impact, Titanic probably would not have sunk. "Bad luck" might almost be a more specific conclusion as to why the Ship ultimately sank.

- Source, RMS Titanic Inc.

There were 2,240 on board the Titanic during her maiden voyage, only 706 survived. Even though there were not enough lifeboats onboard, there was still a capacity for 1,178 persons if they had been properly loaded.





Connections to Halifax, Canada

The city of Halifax, Nova Scotia played a key role during the tragedy's aftermath and became the final resting place of many of Titanic's unclaimed victims.

Three Halifax ships were involved in the grim task of recovering victims - many of whom were laid to rest in three of the city's cemeteries. Rows of black granite headstones, each inscribed with the same date, April 15, 1912, are a stark reminder of the disaster.

There were 328 bodies recovered, with 209 being returned to Halifax; the badly damaged, or deteriorated bodies were buried at sea. Of the 119 buried at sea, about 60 were unidentified at the time and 49 remain unidentified.

Once victims were returned to Halifax, a temporary morgue was set up in the Mayflower Curling Rink near the northwest corner of Agricola and McCully Streets. From there, identified bodies were shipped out to families' or interred in Halifax according to families' wishes. The Halifax Deputy Registrar of Deaths, John Henry Barnstead, supervised the handling of victims, with all personal effects kept in small canvas bags, numbered to match the body number assigned at sea. Careful records of the artifacts were kept and can be inspected today at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. J. H. Barnstead's son, Arthur S., was to be appointed head of the Mortuary Committee five-and-a-half years later after the devastating Explosion in Halifax Harbour when Halifax and Dartmouth had 10 times as many victims to deal with.

Ultimately 150 Titanic victims were buried in ceremonies from May 3, to June 12, 1912. Nineteen are in the Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery, ten are in the Baron de Hirsch Jewish Cemetery, and 121 are in the Fairview Lawn Cemetery. Of these, 44 remain unidentified.

- Source: Government of Nova Scotia

