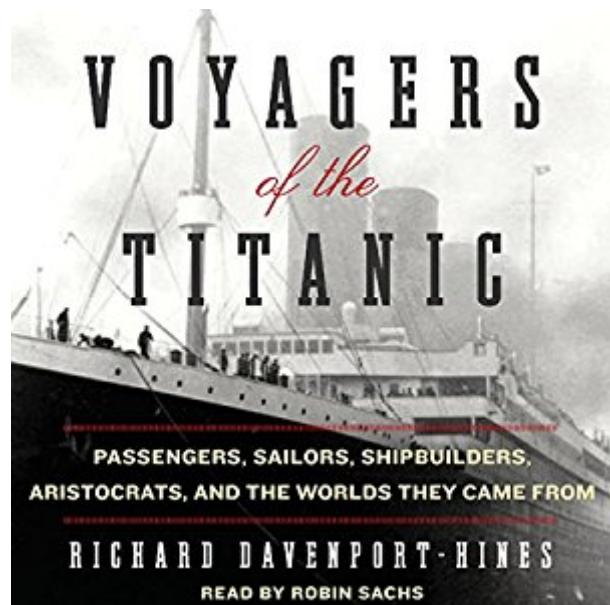


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# Voyagers Of The Titanic: Passengers, Sailors, Shipbuilders, Aristocrats, And The Worlds They Came From



## Synopsis

Late in the night of April 14, 1912, the mighty Titanic, a passenger liner traveling from Southampton, England, to New York City, struck an iceberg four hundred miles south of Newfoundland. Its sinking over the next two and a half hours brought the ship-mythological in name and size-100 years of infamy. Of the 2,240 people aboard the ship, 1,517 perished either by drowning or by freezing to death in the frigid North Atlantic waters. What followed the disaster was tantamount to a worldwide outpouring of grief: In New York, Paris, London, and other major cities, people lined the streets and crowded around the offices of the White Star Line, the Titanic's shipping company, to inquire for news of their loved ones and for details about the lives of some of the famous people of their time. While many accounts of the Titanic's voyage focus on the technical or mechanical aspects of why the ship sank, *Voyagers of the Titanic* follows the stories of the men, women, and children whose lives intersected on the vessel's fateful last day, covering the full range of first, second, and third class— from plutocrats and captains of industry to cobblers and tailors looking for a better life in America. Richard Davenport-Hines delves into the fascinating lives of those who ate, drank, reveled, dreamed, and died aboard the mythic ship: from John Jacob Astor IV, the wealthiest person on board, whose comportment that night was subject to speculation and gossip for years after the event, to Archibald Butt, the much-beloved military aide to Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft, who died helping others into the Titanic's few lifeboats. With magnificent prose, *Voyagers of the Titanic* also brings to life the untold stories of the ship's middle and third classes-clergymen, teachers, hoteliers, engineers, shopkeepers, counterjumpers, and clerks-each of whom had a story that not only illuminates the fascinating ship but also the times in which it sailed. In addition, Davenport-Hines explores the fascinating politics behind the Titanic's creation, which involved larger-than-life figures such as J. P. Morgan, the ship's owner, and Lord Pirrie, the ship's builder. The memory of this tragedy still remains a part of the American psyche and *Voyagers of the Titanic* brings that clear night back to us with all of its drama and pathos.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Voyagers of the Titanic" marks the one hundredth anniversary of the Titanic by re-telling the stories of the passengers aboard this ship and the events before, during, and after the sinking. Part One gives a general overview of the Titanic on land, and the shipowners as well as the shipbuilders that were behind it. Separate sections also follow the sailors, and discuss the boarding and the speed. Part Two follows the Titanic at sea and describes the people on the voyage--the first class, second class, third class, and the officers and crew. Part Three follows the collision and the events to happen afterwards. I found it interesting how much detail the author was able to gather about the ship and its accommodations, as well as the huge difference between the social classes. As the author notes, "With the exception of the officers' quarters on the boat deck, the second-class smoking room at the end of the B deck, and the second-class library and third-class lounge and smoking room on the C deck, most of this superstructure was dedicated to the needs of the first-class passengers. And the first class, as described in this book, with all of its elevators, Turkish baths, gymnasiums, libraries, barber shops, and dark room for photographers, among other accommodations, was certainly striking. However where this book really shines is when it shares the stories of the passengers. Several well-known personalities of the times who had tickets cancelled shortly before Titanic was set to sail--among them Clay Frick, Pierpont Morgan, George Vanderbilt Milton Hershey and Robert Bacon, the outgoing U.S. ambassador to France. Others weren't so lucky. There were at least seven sets of honeymooners in first class, among them Jack Astor who owned much of New York.

Several books have been written on the Titanic, with more to follow now with the 100th anniversary coming up next month. At least to me the first part of this book got off to a slow start with a lot of detailed information regarding the shipbuilders, shipowners, sailors, and even the passengers on the ship. I expected some detail, but not as much as the book included. I did find it interesting that several dozen miners from Cornwall, England, were on the ship headed to the Quincy Mine in

Copper Country in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan where I live. They all perished in the ship's sinking. My interest in the book picked up considerably from the time the ship hit the iceberg, the chaos that followed in getting passengers to leave the ship into a lifeboat, the subsequent arrival in New York, and what became of some of the survivors. I found it interesting that the ship may very well have survived had it not swerved to hit the iceberg. Chances of its survival would have been much better had it hit the iceberg head on. In addition the ship's speed was too fast in these dangerous waters. Perhaps those involved want to impress how quickly they could cross the Atlantic. Chaos reigned in getting passengers to disembark from the ship with passengers being told there was no great danger to avoid panic. Initially lifeboats were cast into the water only half full. The ship's captain, Bruce Ismay, has often been criticized for going into a lifeboat at the end saying he should have "gone down with the ship." He wasn't taking anyone's place in a boat. It would only have been an additional needless waste of life. A great deal of consternation took place in New York regarding the many rumors of the ship's fate or who was among the survivors.

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