

TITANIC



a century of remembrance



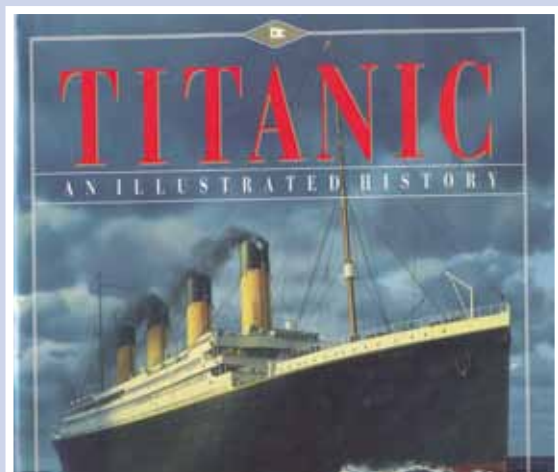
ERICH BUCHHAUS

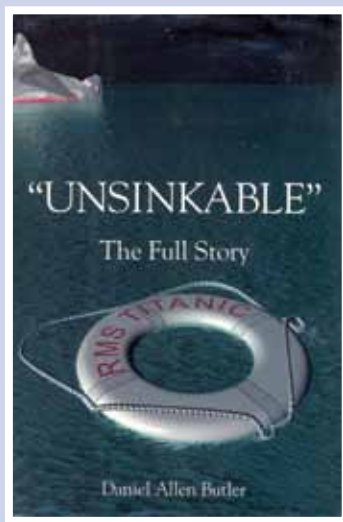
Book Selector

This year marks the centenary of the maiden voyage and sinking of the Titanic, the pride of the White Star Line of ocean liners. The British Empire was at the peak of its industrial power and the RMS Titanic, constructed at the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast, Ireland, was the largest vessel afloat. This British-registered, four-funnelled ocean liner was built for the transatlantic passenger and mail service between Southampton and New York. One of the largest and most luxurious passenger liners at the time, the Titanic was also considered by most to be unsinkable. On 10 April 1912 the Titanic sailed from Southampton with 2,200 passengers and crew on board. Four days later she collided with an iceberg and sank, resulting in the death of 1,500 people (only 700 survived). Because of this unexpected tragedy, the Titanic became perhaps the best-known shipwreck in the world, capturing public imagination and inspiring many popular books and movies.

For years the location of its sinking was a mystery until the eventual discovery of its wreckage in 1985. This happened on the first trip of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's imaging vehicle, called Argo, when researchers first caught glimpses of the Titanic wreck during the summer of 1985. Though the discovery of the Titanic was undoubtedly a massive result for the researchers, it was not their intended goal. The trip was paid for by the US Navy, and they used this top-grade technology for the search for two lost Navy nuclear submarines that had sunk in the 1960s. Oceanography professor Robert Ballard had approached the Navy about potentially funding his search for the Titanic using the new Argo technology, but he was rejected. As an afterthought, Navy officials thought that the Argo technology could be used to see their sunken nuclear submarines. They agreed to employ Mr Ballard and give him hope for his Titanic search, only if he first looked for the two submarines. Once he had completed these two trips, (finding that they had imploded due to the immense water pressure), his team

continued to search for a similar implosion trail to the Titanic. On the morning of 1 September 1985, they found it. A year later, he returned to the site with a new crew and more time allotted to allow further investigation of the remains. This operation was covered in Robert Ballard's 1987 publication of the book called **The discovery of the Titanic** which provides a compelling, first-hand account of his twelve-year quest to find the sunken liner. It featured for the first time never-before-seen photographs, rare archival pictures, charts, and paintings. This set the trend for later titles to be published such as the lavishly illustrated 1992 title, **Titanic: an illustrated history** by Don Lynch, with paintings by Ken Marschall. The author, an historian of the Titanic Historical Society, produced not only a complete chronology of the Titanic from the first plans and construction to the submarine photographs taken of its wreckage, but also fresh premonitory frissons of disaster. Although the book is richly illustrated with photographs, it is the artwork by Ken Marschall that satisfactorily encompasses the sight as though a photographer with colour film had been on board.





Other titles followed, such as the 1995 title **The riddle of the Titanic** by Robin Gardiner and Dan van der Vat that offers a well-written, well-illustrated and intellectually satisfying study revealing new evidence gleaned from underwater photographs of the wreck. Another well-researched and balanced account of the disaster and the aftermath is the 1998 title **Unsinkable: the full story of RMS Titanic** by Daniel Butler, drawing on first-person accounts and solid secondary sources. Although not heavily illustrated, Butler's text uses vivid survivor narratives and anecdotes to capture both the feel of Edwardian society and life aboard a North Atlantic liner. A title published at the same time (1998) was **Titanic – triumph and tragedy** by John Eaton and Charles A Haas. It was a reprint of the second edition (1994) that first appeared in 1986. This title not only offers a comprehensive overview of the Titanic, but covers and gives lists of the staff and passengers alike with plenty of photographs, even providing examples of lists of claims made by survivors for possessions lost.

A classic tale of the Titanic is that of Walter Lord's 1956 title **A night to remember**, based on interviews with surviving passengers. This was made into a British film in 1958 and was billed as the greatest sea drama of its time. However, this was not the first time the incident had been filmed, as the first movie about the tragedy was a short silent film called **Saved from the Titanic** (1912), starring Dorothy Gibson, an actress at the time and passenger who survived the disaster. This film unfortunately no longer exists. Another film appeared in 1953 under the title **Titanic** and it featured an all-star Hollywood cast that included Barbara Stanwyck, Clifton Webb and a young Robert Wagner. The plot tells the story of an unhappy couple and their two children. Just before the Titanic sinks, they make up with each other, but the father and son drown. A 1980 movie called **Raise the Titanic** told of a group of people eager to raise the wreck of the Titanic in order to obtain a rare and valuable mineral said to be on board. In the made-for-TV movie called **SOS**

Titanic (1979) the different experiences of three groups of passengers – travelling first, second and third class – are shown. The most recent is James Cameron's movie **The Titanic** (released in December 1997) which took the world by storm, much as the original ship earned the world's awe before her untimely demise. **The Titanic** earned its place as the most nominated movie in film history. In total, the film was nominated for 14 Oscars and managed to bring home 11 of the coveted awards. No other film in history had won that many awards. The main (fictional) story is of course the love story between Jack (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Rose (Kate Winslet), two passengers from entirely different social classes. For the most part, the production team, scriptwriters, and actors of the movie strived very hard to make sure that the film portrayed the tragedy of the original ship's story as accurately as possible.

It was sad when that great ship went down – though not for the publishing industry, then or now. Here follows a selection from the dozens of books intended to mark the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the vessel thought to be unsinkable. In **Shadow of the Titanic**, Andrew Wilson (2011) offers a moving look at how some lives were affected by living through this catastrophic event. Wilson chronicles the before-and-after lives of such well-heeled souls as Lady Duff Gordon and Madeleine Astor. The most enterprising survivor, however, may have been Dorothy Gibson, a movie actress who starred in a film version of the sinking that debuted a mere four months after the event. Some reputations were destroyed, and some survivors were so psychologically damaged that they took their own lives years later. Other books marking this year's centenary of the sinking of the Titanic seem to concentrate more on personal stories of the people involved. In the 2011 title **And the band played on: the Titanic violist and the glovemaker: a true story of love**, author Christopher Ward writes about his grandfather, Jock Hume, one of the eight Titanic bandmen who famously played on the deck to help maintain morale as the ship sank. Jock died, leaving a partner, Mary, to whom he was not married, who was pregnant with Ward's mother.

Violet Jessop, a stewardess on the Titanic, tells of the hardships encountered by those who worked the North Atlantic run. This memoir can be read in **Titanic survivor: the memoirs of Violet Jessop, stewardess**. Few can match this survivor's first-hand account in imparting a sense of immediacy.

Attention is focused on the 49-year-old J Bruce Ismay, the managing director of the White Star shipping line, in Frances Wilson's 2012 title **How to survive the Titanic, or The sinking of J Bruce Ismay**. He became infamous because he boarded a lifeboat leaving his company's brand new ship, Titanic, to sink and more than 1,500 passengers and crew to die. Not technically a passenger, he, as the ship's 'owner', bore some responsibility for the lack of adequate lifeboats; his right to a seat in one of those lifeboats has been debated for almost 100 years. With access to Ismay family material in private hands and an impressive command of the sources, the author has composed a very readable study of an unsympathetic character.

Various fiction titles have appeared over the years, such as Daniele Steel's **No greater love** which features Edwina Winfield and her five siblings who survive the sinking of the Titanic, but whose

parents and fiancé are not as lucky. Edwina must not only care for her younger siblings, but must now also manage the family's newspaper. Another popular fiction title is Beryl Bainbridge's **Every man for himself** which is a rare and remarkable novel that provides details of what happened without being weighed down by it. The story follows the nephew of industrialist JP Morgan and others aboard. More recent titles are **The captain's daughter** by Leah Fleming about a friendship formed between two women, one which is destined to transcend the Atlantic and social differences between them to last a lifetime. Alex Scarrow climbs onto the Titanic centenary bandwagon in his stunning new historical thriller **The candle man** that links the Titanic and Jack the Ripper. The setting is on the Titanic where an unknown man reveals to a young girl his role in the Whitechapel murders that took place in London during the year 1888.

There are a lot more titles around, but most, so far, we have not seen.

In conclusion we can be assured that the world's interest in the fascinating history of the Titanic will endure as the thirst for information regarding her memory will be kept alive by numerous books, films, exhibits, and memorials.

Selected booklist of titles in the Library Service

Non-fiction

- Ballard, Robert D. **The discovery of the Titanic.**- Hodder, 1987.
 Ballard, Robert D. **Lost liners.**- Hodder, 1997.
 Butler, Daniel Allen. **Unsinkable: the full story of RMS Titanic.**- Stackpole Bks., [c.1998].
 Eaton, John P and Haas, Charles A. **Titanic - triumph and tragedy 2nd. ed.**- Stephens, 1994 [1998 repr.].
 Gardiner, Robin and Van der Vat, Dan. **The riddle of the Titanic.**- Weidenfeld, 1995.
 Jessop, Violet. **Titanic survivor: the memoirs of Violet Jessop, stewardess.**- Sutton Pub., 2007.
 Lord, Walter. **A night to remember.**- Longmans, Green, 1956.
 Lynch, Don. **Titanic: an illustrated history.**- Hodder, 1995.
 Padfield, Peter. **The Titanic and the Californian.**- Hodder, 1965.
 Wade, Wyn Craig. **The Titanic: end of a dream.**- Weidenfeld, 1980.
 Ward, Christopher. **And the band played on: the Titanic violinist and the glovemaker: a true story of love, loss and betrayal.**- Hodder, 2011.
 Winoccur, Jack. **The story of the Titanic: as told by its survivors.**- Dover, 1960.

Fiction

- Bainbridge, Beryl. **Every man for himself.**- Duckworth, 1996.
 Cussler, Clive. **Raise the Titanic!**- Warner Bks., 1992 [1996 repr.].
 Fleming, Leah. **The captain's daughter.**- Simon, 2012.
 Peck, Richard. **Amanda / Miranda.**- Transworld Pub., 1981.
 Scarrow, Alex. **The candle man.**- Orion, 2012.
 Steel, Danielle. **No greater love.**- Bantam, 1991 [1992 repr.].

Juvenile non-fiction

- Adams, Simon. **Titanic.**- Dorling Kindersley, 1999.
 Ballard, Robert D and Crean, Patrick. **Exploring the Titanic.**- Scholastic, 1988 [1998 repr.].

- Claybourne, Anna and Daynes, Katie. **Titanic.**- Jacklin, 2008.
 Dubowski, Mark. **Titanic: the disaster that shocked the world!**- Dorling Kindersley, [c.1998].
 Dudman, John. **The sinking of the Titanic.**- Wayland, 1987 [1989 repr.].
 Kentley, Eric. **Discover the Titanic.**- Dorling Kindersley, 1997.
 Noon, Steve and Kentley, Eric. **Story of the Titanic.**- Dorling Kindersley, 2001.
 Tanaka, Shelley and Marschall, Ken. **On board the Titanic: what it was like when the great liner sank.**- Scholastic/Madison Press, 1996.
 Wilkinson, Philip. **Titanic: disaster at sea.**- Capstone, 2012.

Juvenile Fiction

- Bunting, Eve. **SOS Titanic.**- Scholastic, 1996.
 Crew, Gary and Whatley, Bruce. **Pig on the Titanic: a true story.**- HarperCollins, 2005.
 Crisp, Marty. **White Star: a dog on the Titanic.**- Scholastic, 2006.
 Wallace, Jim. **Terror on the Titanic.**- Bantam Bks., 1997.

Videos

- Secrets of the Titanic.**
Titanic: anatomy of disaster.
Titanic: the nightmare and the dream.
Titanic: treasure of the deep.

