



## TITANIC: THE STORY LIVES ON

In 1912, the largest and most luxurious ship in the world set sail on its maiden voyage, from England to America.

When it left port on April 10th ~with over 2 200 people on board~ the Titanic was believed to be unsinkable, but on April 15th the ship sank in the Atlantic ocean after hitting an **iceberg**.

Because there were not enough lifeboats for everyone, around 1 500 people ~rich and poor alike~ **perished** in the wreck.

The story of the titanic shocked the world when the great ship sank. After the sinking, many people wanted to find the ship, and some even wanted to raise it, but this was difficult if not impossible, with the technology at the time.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, several serious **expeditions** tried to locate the ship using **sonar**. Crew members **scanned** large areas of the seafloor. None of these efforts were successful.

US navy researcher Robert Ballard was fascinated by the Titanic story. Even after a failed effort to locate the ship in 1977, he didn't give up. In the summer of 1985, Ballard worked with a French team.

After **scanning** the sea floor with high resolution **sonar** for five weeks, the search had turned up nothing.

Ballard continued the search using a new deep-sea camera device instead. For nine more days crew members saw nothing but the sea floor on the research **vessel** screens. But just after midnight on September 1<sup>st</sup>, they began to see unusual objects on the sea floor. Sure enough, the objects were **debris** from the Titanic. Soon, researchers saw images of the shipwreck itself; the Titanic had been found!

News of Ballard's discovery traveled around the world people were eager to learn more about what happened to the ship in 1912. Some survivors had said that the unsinkable ship had broken apart, but most people assumed that the ship sank in one piece. This mystery was finally solved; the ship was found in two pieces.



The following summer, Ballard returned to the wreck. This time he went down 3.8 kilometers in a deep sea **submarine** to see the wreck in person. The ship was rusted, but well-**preserved**.

Some objects inside the ship remained where their owners had left them.

Ballard explored the ship's bow and stern sections, as well as the debris field between them.

He was careful not to **disturb** anything. Since so many people had died in the disaster, he thought it would be disrespectful to take objects from the site.

After Ballard's discovery, many others explored the wreck. Not only did these scientists learn more about the ship, they also made surprising discoveries about the ocean. New species of **bacteria** were discovered in the rust on the ship.

Scientists had expected the ocean floor to be a **barren** desert. Instead, they saw that it was home to a variety of life.

**Controversially**, a French expedition recovered over 1,800 objects from the wreck in 1987. Ballard immediately spoke out about this, believing the wreck to be a grave site.



The remaining survivors agreed with him, but not everyone did.

Future expeditions would recover even more objects, many of these objects were quite ordinary; plates, forks, cups, glasses, decorations, and passengers' belongings. Other objects have been more surprising; paper and clothing survived for decades on the ocean floor, bottles of wine, jars of olives and vials of **perfume**, still seemed *as good as new*. Clocks and watches still

showed times around 2:20 AM -the time the ship sank.

The ship's **artifacts** have been displayed in exhibitions around the world. Supporters of recovering **artifacts** argue that **recovering** and **preserving** the objects helps **preserve** history. This may no longer be a debate for the Titanic's contents. Scientists have learned that the wreck itself is **rapidly deteriorating**. Luckily, the sad story of the Titanic is far from being lost; **countless** books, movies, new discoveries, and **exhibitions**, continue to tell the story of the famous ship's first and only voyage.

## Questions:

**What was the Titanic initially believed to be?**

- a) The fastest ship in the world
- b) The largest and most luxurious ship
- c) The safest ship ever built
- d) An unsinkable ship

**How many people were on board the Titanic when it sank?**

- a) 1,500
- b) 2,200
- c) 3,500
- d) 1,000

**What method did Robert Ballard initially use to search for the Titanic?**

- a) A deep-sea submarine
- b) Sonar technology
- c) A surface ship
- d) A helicopter

**When was the Titanic discovered?**

- a) April 10, 1912
- b) September 1, 1985
- c) June 15, 1986
- d) July 4, 1977

**What did Ballard do to respect the site of the Titanic wreck?**

- a) He took artifacts from the site
- b) He disturbed the wreck to investigate
- c) He left objects undisturbed
- d) He built a museum around the wreck

**What controversial action was taken by a French expedition in 1987?**

- a) They took no objects from the wreck
  - b) They recovered over 1,800 artifacts
  - c) They raised the ship to the surface
  - d) They stopped further explorations
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## Answers:

1. b) The largest and most luxurious ship
2. b) 2,200
3. b) Sonar technology
4. b) September 1, 1985
5. c) He left objects undisturbed
6. b) They recovered over 1,800 artifacts

## Vocabulary:

**iceberg** - *noun* a large mass of ice floating at sea; usually broken off of a polar glacier; lettuce with crisp tightly packed light-green leaves in a firm head

**perish** - *verb* pass from physical life and lose all bodily attributes and functions necessary to sustain life

**expedition** - *noun* a journey organized for a particular purpose; a military campaign designed to achieve a specific objective in a foreign country; an organized group of people undertaking a journey for a particular purpose; a journey taken for pleasure; the property of being prompt and efficient

**sonar** - *noun* a measuring instrument that sends out an acoustic pulse in water and measures distances in terms of the time for the echo of the pulse to return

**scan** - *noun* the act of scanning; systematic examination of a prescribed region; an image produced by scanning; *verb* read metrically; make a wide, sweeping search of; move a light beam over; in electronics, to reproduce an image; examine hastily; examine minutely or intensely; conform to a metrical pattern; obtain data from magnetic tapes

**vessel** - *noun* a craft designed for water transportation; an object used as a container (especially for liquids); a tube in which a body fluid circulates

**debris** - *noun* the remains of something that has been destroyed or broken up

**submarine** - *adj.* beneath the surface of the sea; *noun* a submersible warship usually armed with torpedoes; a large sandwich made of a long crusty roll split lengthwise and filled with meats and cheese (and tomato and onion and lettuce)

and condiments); different names are used in different sections of the United States; *verb* attack by submarine; control a submarine; bring down with a blow to the legs; throw with an underhand motion; move forward or under in a sliding motion

**preserve** - *noun* a reservation where animals are protected; a domain that seems to be specially reserved for someone; fruit preserved by cooking with sugar; *verb* prevent (food) from rotting; keep undisturbed for personal or private use for hunting, shooting, or fishing; to keep up and reserve for personal or special use; keep in safety and protect from harm, decay, loss, or destruction; keep or maintain in unaltered condition; cause to remain or last; maintain in safety from injury, harm, or danger

**disturb** - *verb* damage as if by shaking or jarring; move deeply; destroy the peace or tranquility of; tamper with; change the arrangement or position of

**bacteria** - *noun* (microbiology) single-celled or noncellular spherical or spiral or rod-shaped organisms lacking chlorophyll that reproduce by fission; important as pathogens and for biochemical properties; taxonomy is difficult; often considered plants

**barren** - *adj.* incapable of sustaining life; not bearing offspring; completely wanting or lacking; providing no shelter or sustenance; *noun* an uninhabited wilderness that is worthless for cultivation

**Controversial** - *adj.* marked by or capable of arousing controversy

**perfume** - *noun* a toiletry that emits and diffuses a fragrant odor; a distinctive odor that is pleasant; *verb* apply perfume to; fill or impregnate with an odor

**artifact** - *noun* a man-made object taken as a whole

**recover** - *verb* regain a former condition after a financial loss; cover anew; get or find back; recover the use of; regain or make up for; get over an illness or shock; reuse (materials from waste products)

**rapid** - *adj.* done or occurring in a brief period of time; characterized by speed; moving with or capable of moving with high speed; *noun* a part of a river where the current is very fast

**deteriorate** - *verb* become worse or disintegrate; grow worse

**countless** - *adj.* too numerous to be counted