

Titanic: The Official Story, April 14-15, 1912. New York: Random House, 1997. 18 documents. \$25.00. ISBN 0-375-50115-0.

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History records that the British luxury passenger liner *Titanic*, on her maiden voyage, sank south of the grand banks of Newfoundland on the night of April 14-15, 1912, after colliding with an iceberg. Fitted with a double-bottomed hull, divided into 16 watertight compartments, she was considered "unsinkable." Due to an insufficient number of lifeboats (1,178 boat spaces for 2,224 persons on board), the speed with which she sank (about 2 hours), the frigid condition of the sea, and no immediate response to *Titanic's* distress signals, 1,513 lives were lost. In addition to the official examinations of the immediate disaster, the first International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea was called in London the following year, with the result that rules were established requiring that every passenger ship have lifeboat space for each person embarked, that lifeboat drills be held during each voyage, and that ships maintain 24-hour radio watch for distress signals. Moreover, to warn ships of icebergs in the North Atlantic, an International Ice Patrol was established.

While public interest in the *Titanic* was recently rekindled with the September 1985 discovery (and subsequent filming) of the vessel on the ocean floor, her disaster became far more captivating with the December 1997 release of James Cameron's epic motion picture portrayal of her demise. This latter event prompted the publication of a variety of books memorializing the ship, those who sailed on her, and her story. Random House has reproduced a "document study pack" prepared by the British Public Record Office (PRO) in London from its *Titanic* holdings. Gleaned from the PRO collection were 18 documents which were then reproduced in facsimile versions of the originals. (The PRO's "study pack" and *Titanic* pictures offerings may be accessed through the CCTA Government Information Service Websites <<http://www.open.gov.uk/>>, by selecting Public Record Office from the Organisational Index, consulting "PRO Publications," and browsing "General Interest Titles.")

Accompanying the facsimile documents is a 15-page illustrated guide, providing some background information and a bibliography, and explaining each record in chronological order. The guide appears to have been prepared by the PRO, but its authorship is not indicated.

Among the documents included in the facsimile collection are certain registration and sailing forms; deck plans; communiques and press reports concerning the sinking; a sample of returns of passengers drowned; an escape account; and enquiry materials. The final report of the British Commission of Enquiry into the loss of the *Titanic* is produced in full (74 pages). It blamed the disaster on the excessive speed of the ship in waters known to contain icebergs and the failure to maintain a proper watch.

Also included is a "digest of testimony" or index of witnesses appearing before a subcommittee of inquiry of the Senate Committee on Commerce, chaired by Senator William Alden Smith of Michigan. American interest in the disaster might be inferred from the fact that *Titanic* was to berth in New York and had U.S. citizens as passengers. There were, however, deeper motivations. *Titanic* was a British vessel, but was operated by a firm, the White Star Line, owned by an American trust, the International Mercantile Marine Com-

pany (IMMC). The IMMC could be sued under U.S. law if negligence could be established. Furthermore, Senator Smith was a political rival of the IMMC's owner, J.P. Morgan.

A considerable amount of attention has gone into the production of the facsimile documents contained in this packet. They have largely been reproduced in their original size, some with color details, and using good quality paper. Certainly, historians, archivists, and *Titanic* aficionados will find this collection to be of interest, and perhaps, too, will others in the larger community of *GIQ* readers.

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF WORLD WIDE WEB SOURCES

If the review is of a government World Wide Web site, please note the following standard format for proper citation:

Federal Computer Products Center (U.S. Department of Commerce. Technology Administration. National Technical Information Service.) <http://www.ntis.gov/fcpc>. The Web pages were reviewed during the week of March 8, 1998, and were viewed using Netscape 3.0 software.

Please pay particular attention to these points in the review:

- How often is the information updated?
- Is there clear attribution (or identification) of who is responsible for the content of the Web pages? What is the purpose of the Web pages?
- Is there a clear connection with other agency information programs and what the agency chooses to distribute through its Web pages?
- Are the Web pages, from the perspective of graphics, layout, indexing, etc., easy to use and fairly simple to download?

As well, view the Web pages through one or two types of Web browsers and consider how that affects the quality and speed of delivery.

For a complete list of criteria for the evaluation of Websites, see Kristin R. Eschenfelder, John C. Beachboard, Charles R. McClure, and Steven K. Wyman, "Assessing U.S. Federal Government Websites," *Government Information Quarterly*, 14 (1997): 184-185.

Titanic - Official Trailer 1997. Eva Hart speaks about her memories of the Titanic . . survivor interview. Titanic 100 - New CGI of How Titanic Sank. Titanic Theodoor De Mulder.Â Titanic Wiki is the first and largest wiki about the RMS Titanic , founded on 25 September, 2006. This wiki's format also allows anyone to create or edit any article, so we can all work together to create a comprehensive database for fans of the Titanic . Right now, we have reached a size of 1,598 articles with 43,746 edits, and has 18 active users. Topics covered include everything related to the Titanic , also including the 1997 Titanic film by James Cameron. FEATURED ARTICLE: William Murdoch. At 2:20 a.m. on April 15, 1912, the British ocean liner Titanic sinks into the North Atlantic Ocean about 400 miles south of Newfoundland, Canada. The massive.Â The Titanic was designed by the Irish shipbuilder William Pirrie and built in Belfast, and was thought to be the worldâ€™s fastest ship.Â However, just before midnight on April 14, the RMS Titanic failed to divert its course from an iceberg and ruptured at least five of its hull compartments. These compartments filled with water and pulled down the bow of the ship. Because the Titanicâ€™s compartments were not capped at the top, water from the ruptured compartments filled each succeeding compartment, causing the bow to sink and the stern to be raised up to an almost vertical position above the water. Titanic is a 1997 American epic romance and disaster film directed, written, co-produced, and co-edited by James Cameron. Incorporating both historical and fictionalized aspects, it is based on accounts of the sinking of the RMS Titanic, and stars Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet as members of different social classes who fall in love aboard the ship during its ill-fated maiden voyage.