

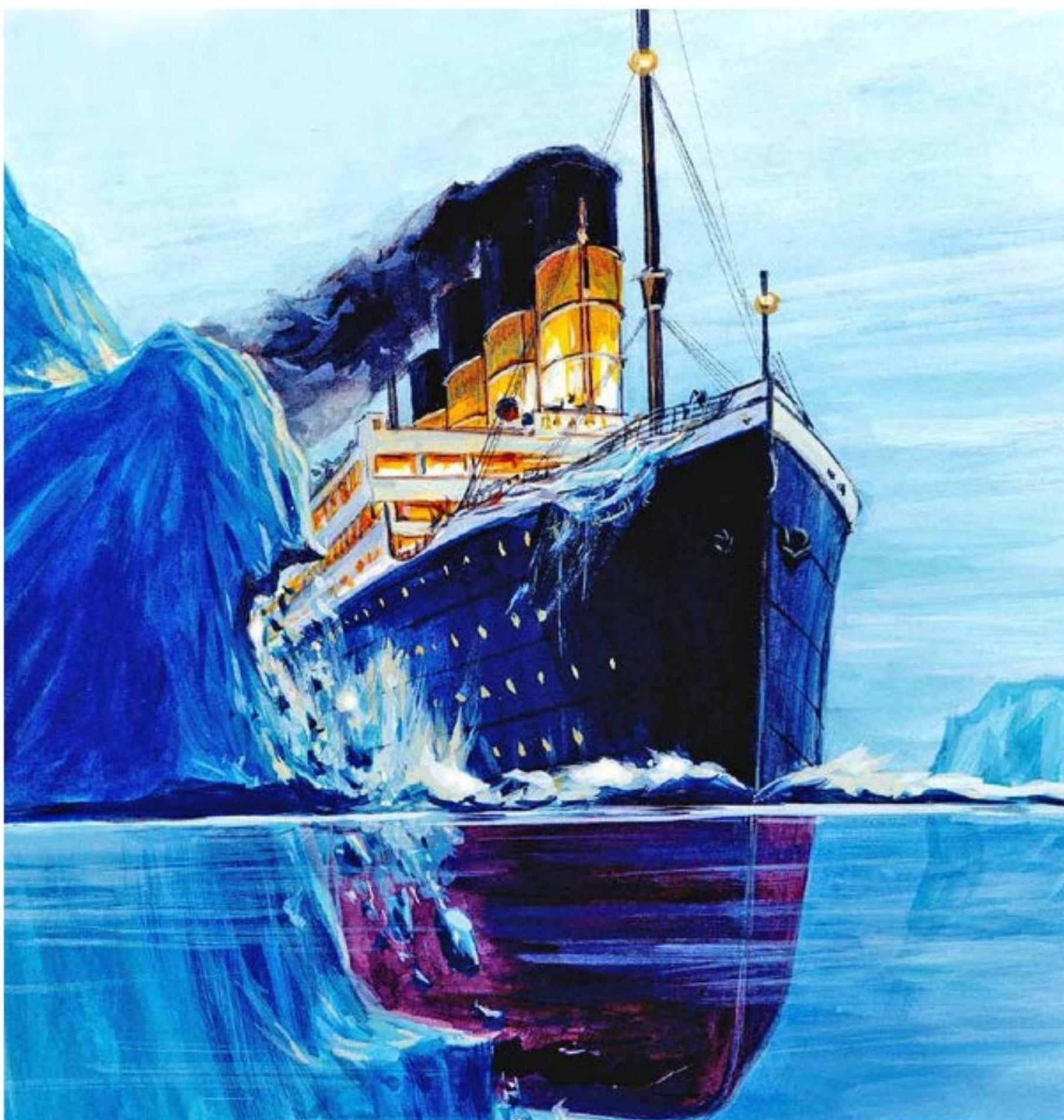
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The Titanic: Lost and Found



Written by Lisa Trumbauer

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Table of Contents

The Grandest Ship	4
At Sea	7
We're Sinking!	9
Rescued.....	12
Found!.....	13
<i>Titanic's Legacy</i>	15
Glossary	16
Index	16

The Grandest Ship

When it was built, many people thought it was the grandest ship to ever sail the seas. Others claimed it was the biggest, and some people even said it was unsinkable.

But on Sunday, April 14, 1912, just before midnight, disaster struck. Within hours the *Titanic*, the most **magnificent** ship of

its time, had sunk to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

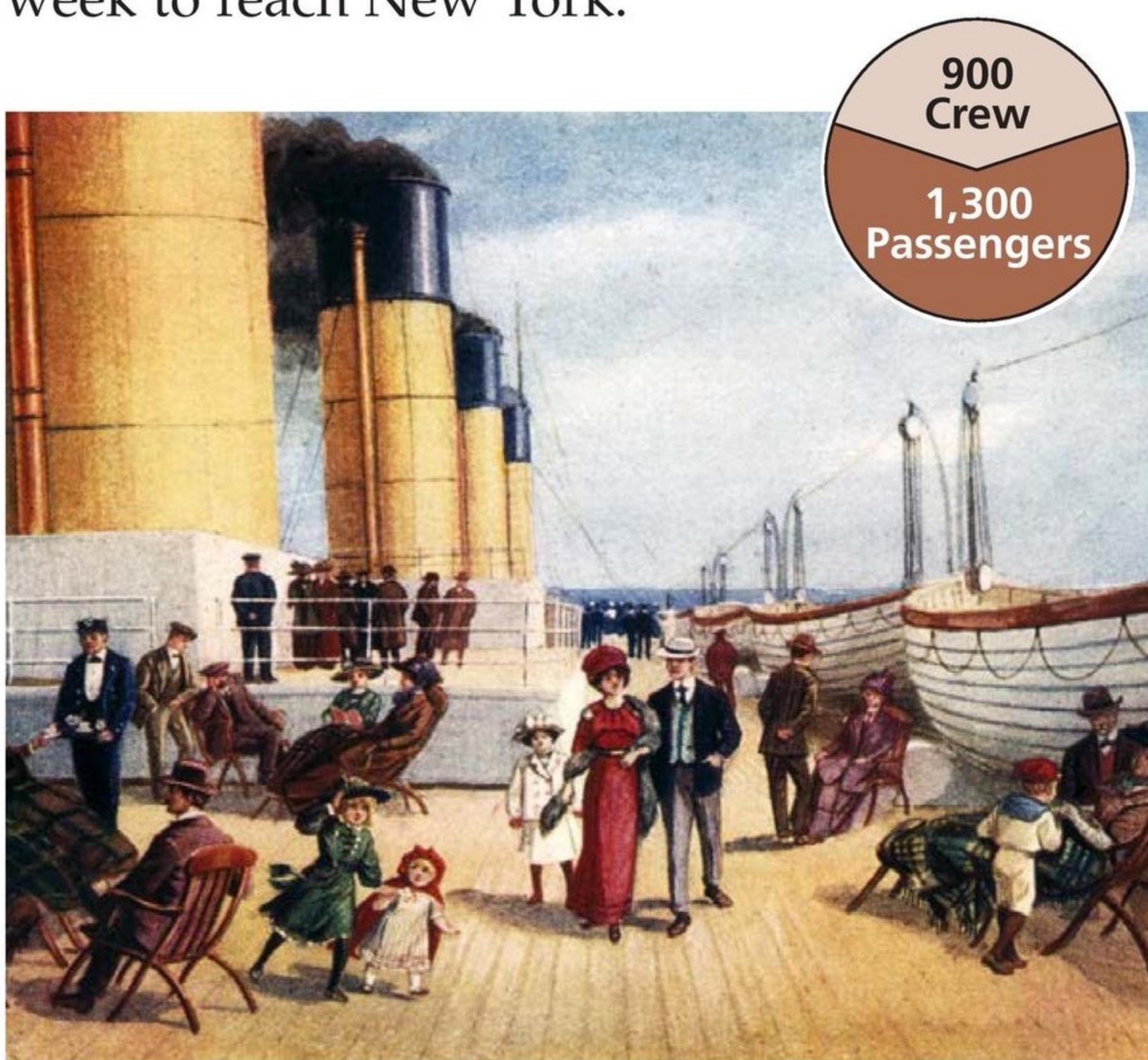
Do You Know?

The full name of the *Titanic* was the R.M.S. *Titanic*. R.M.S. stands for Royal Mail Ship. The *Titanic* was carrying 3,500 bags of mail on the night it sank.



The *Titanic* was built in Northern Ireland to take people and cargo across the Atlantic Ocean. Airplanes were still new **contraptions** in 1912, so the only way to travel from Europe to the United States was by boat.

Passengers began boarding the *Titanic* on Wednesday, April 10, in Southampton, England. They were thrilled to be on what was considered the grandest ship in the world. It was the ship's first trip, also called its maiden voyage, and it would take one week to reach New York.



Wealthy people traveled in style aboard the *Titanic*. They had fancy rooms for dining and elegant rooms for sleeping. First-class rooms perched at the top of the ship and offered the best views and fresh air. The *Titanic* even had four elevators and a lavish staircase.



A detailed copy of the Grand Staircase

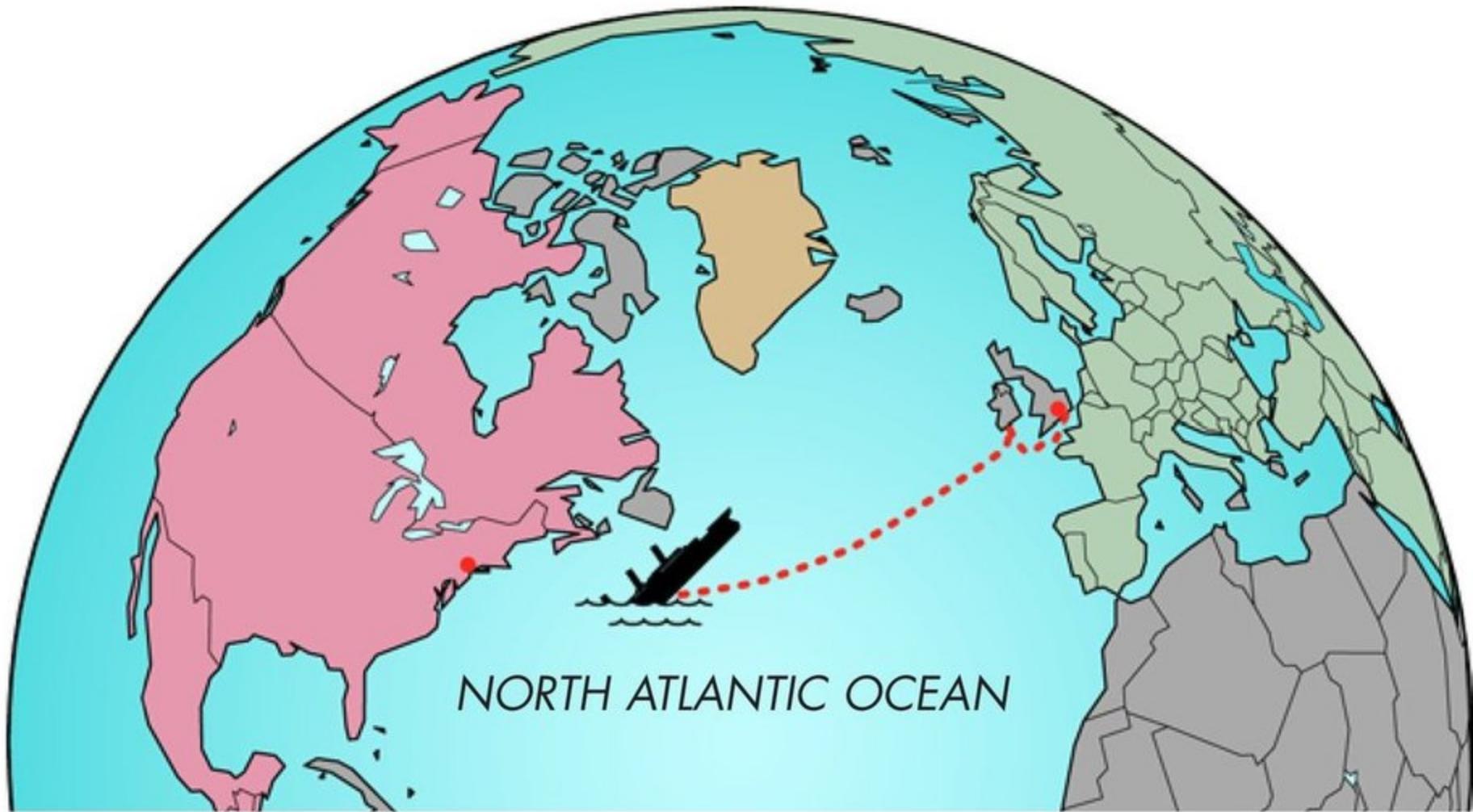
People who did not have a lot of money traveled in less spacious quarters at the bottom of the ship. This area was called **steerage**, and the rooms were cramped and crowded. Steerage passengers were not allowed to go to the upper levels of the ship.

Do You Know?

A person's "class" was one's status in society based on how much money he or she made. "Upper-class" people had a lot of money, whereas "lower-class" people had little. In 1912, different classes were separated.

How much did it cost to travel on the *Titanic*?

First Class:	\$4,350.00 per person
Second Class:	\$65.00 per person
Third Class:	\$35.00 per person



The dotted line shows the first, and only, voyage of the *Titanic*.

At Sea

After leaving Southampton, the *Titanic* stopped in France, then in Ireland, picking up a few more passengers. Finally, on Thursday, April 11, the *Titanic* set sail for the cold, open sea of the North Atlantic Ocean.

The *Titanic* must have been a marvel to behold as it glided across the ocean. It was the biggest ship of its time. It was 269 meters (883 ft) long—about the length of 55 cars parked bumper-to-bumper. It was also as tall as a ten-story building—32 meters (104 ft). Its four towering smokestacks stood 19 meters (62 ft) tall, which is more than 15 fourth-graders standing on one another's shoulders.

Three days after leaving Southampton, the *Titanic* was well into the North Atlantic. This area was known for icebergs, and the ship's workers were responsible for watching out for these dangerous chunks of floating ice.

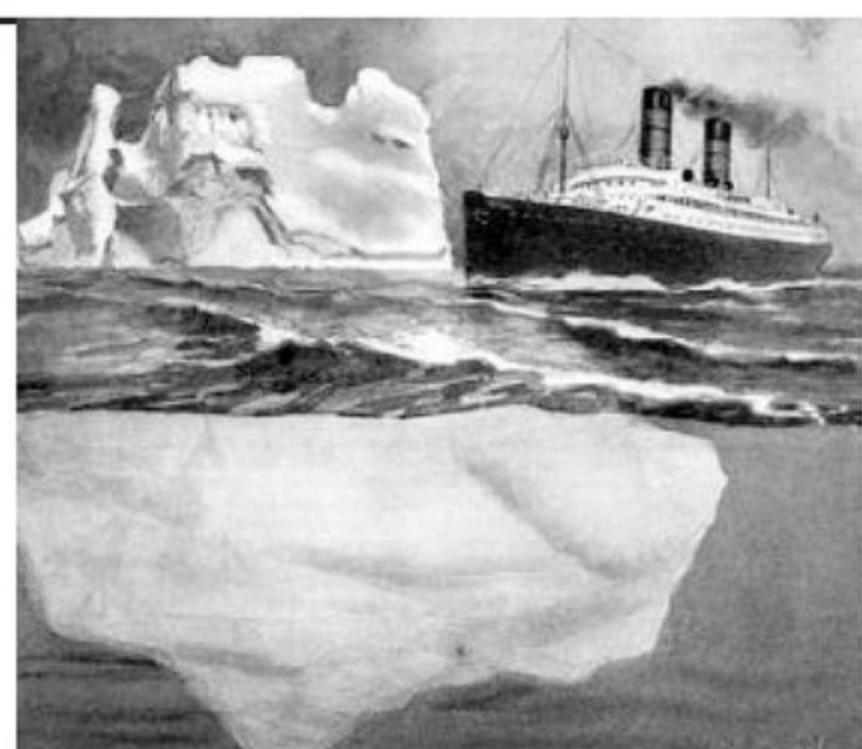
That Sunday evening the sea was calm. No white-capped waves crashed against the rugged icebergs, which would have made the ice easier to spot. Also, the night was ominously dark and cloudless. No moon shone over the still, open waters.

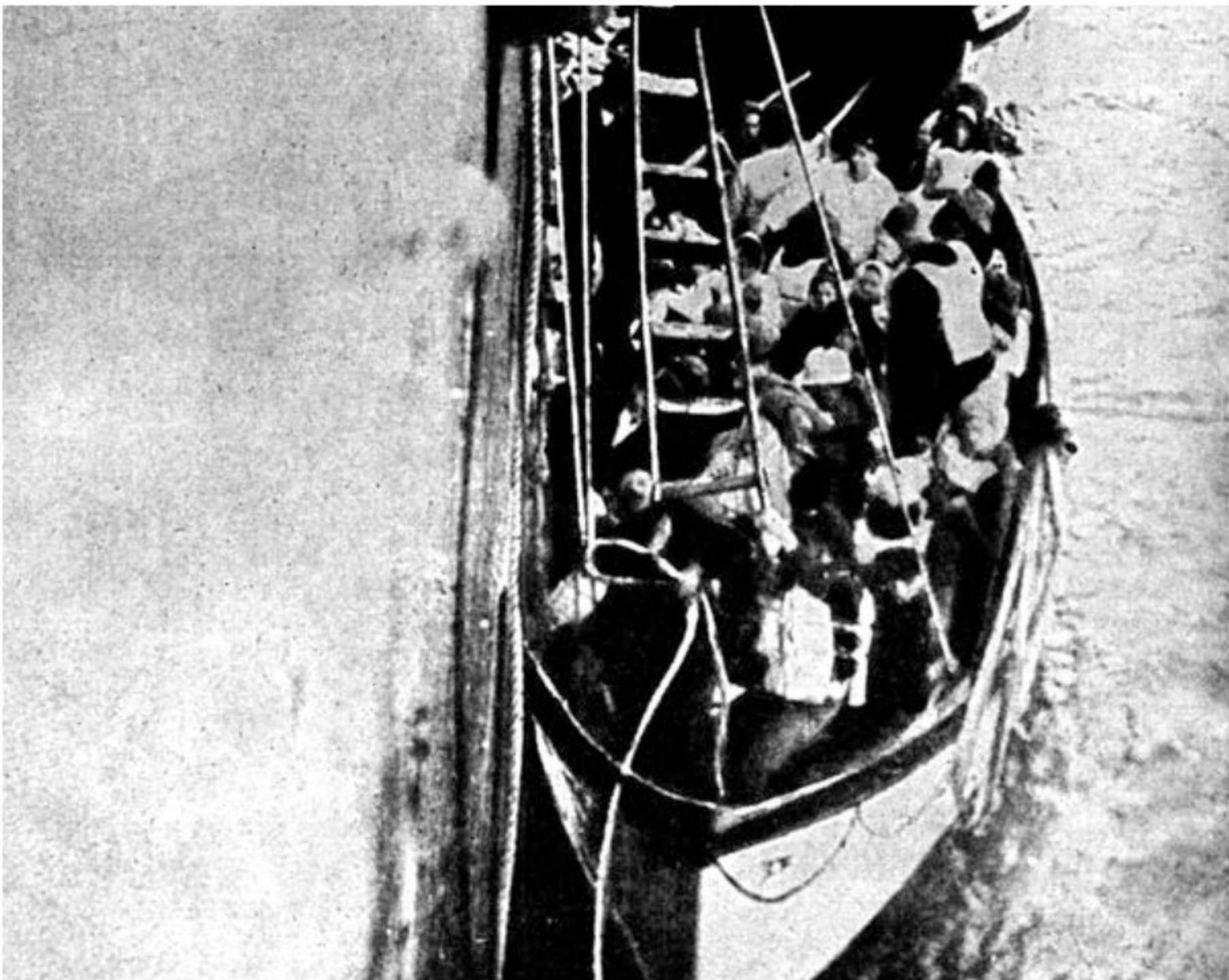
Then, at 11:40 PM, the crew and other passengers felt a jarring thud against the side of the ship. The *Titanic* had struck an iceberg. No one panicked, though, because they believed the *Titanic* was unsinkable.

One person on board knew differently.

A Chilly Discovery

Icebergs are actually bigger below the surface of the water than above it! The *Titanic* did not hit the part of the iceberg that you can see. Instead, it hit the larger part of the iceberg below the surface.

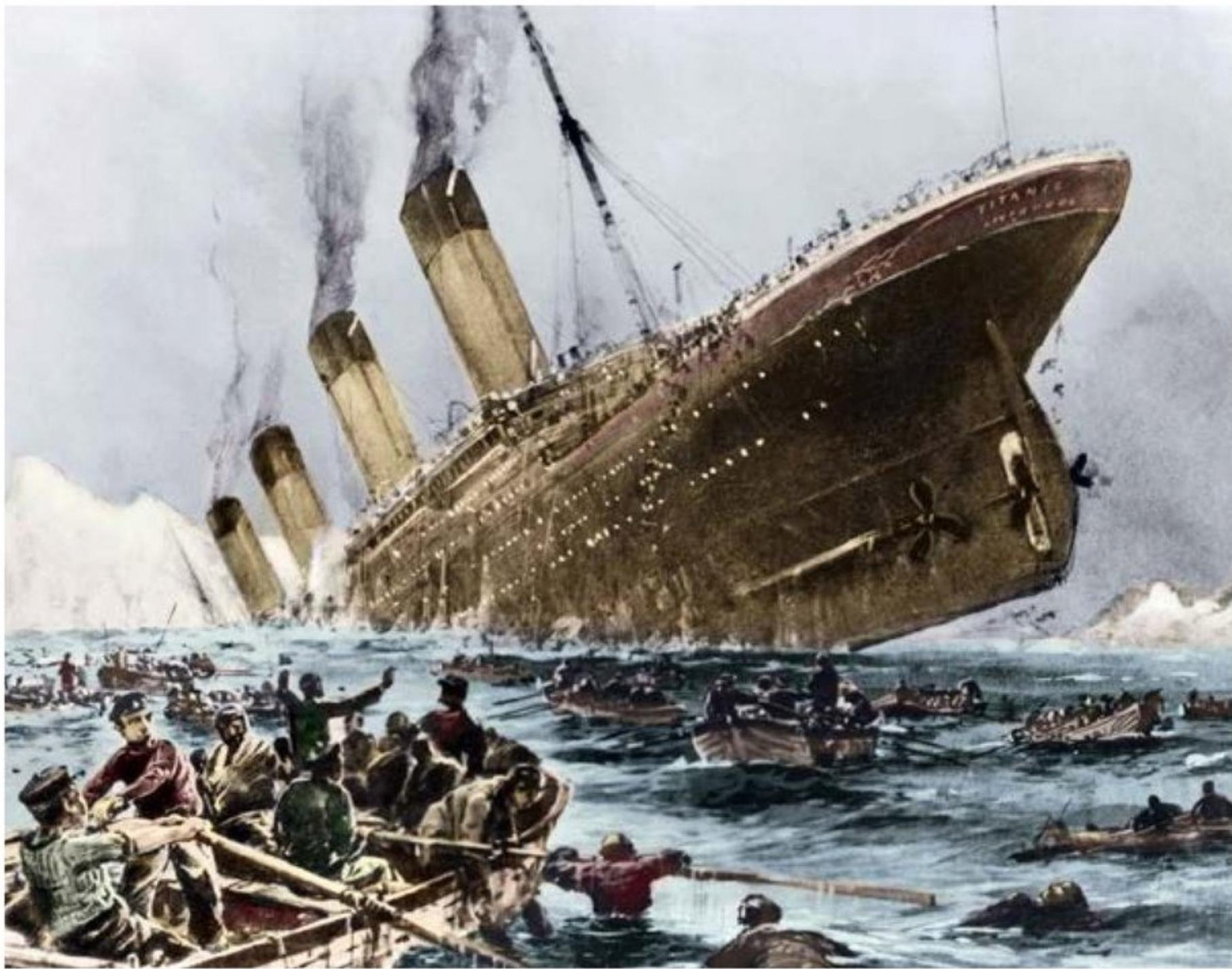




Titanic passengers in one of the few lifeboats

We're Sinking!

That person was Thomas Andrews, who had helped design the *Titanic*. He soon realized by the way the ship was behaving that it was in grave danger. As calmly as possible, the unsuspecting passengers were awakened and told to put on their life jackets. Women and children in first class were ushered into lifeboats, which were then lowered to the ocean far below. People waited patiently for their turns, still not understanding the danger that faced them.



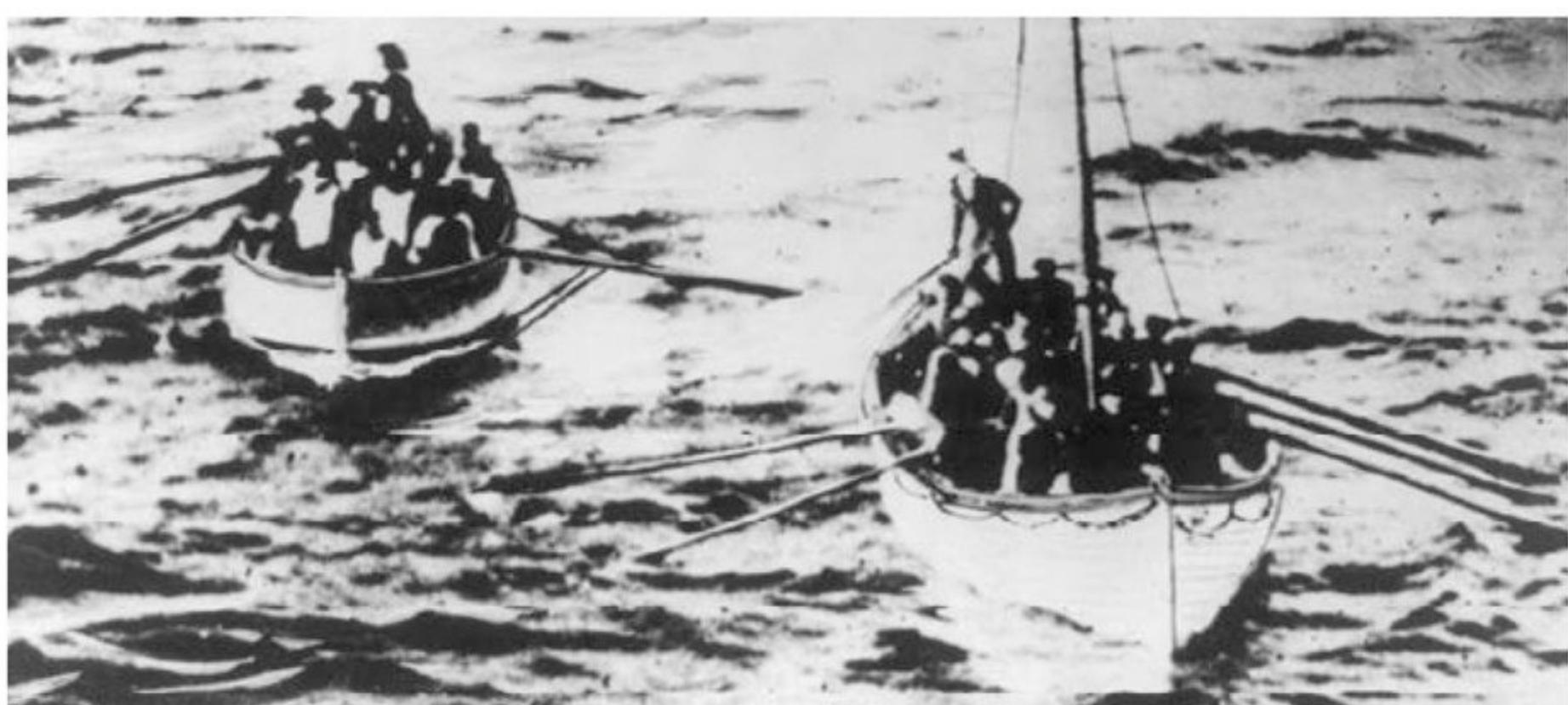
This famous painting shows the *Titanic*'s last moments.

Yet all too soon, it became evident to everyone on board that the *Titanic* was in **dire** trouble. The supposedly unsinkable ship was sinking, and it did not have enough lifeboats for everyone. Resolutely, the ship's band stayed on deck and played music to keep everyone calm.

Some people prayed quietly and waited for the worst. Others **frantically** grabbed objects that might help them float in the water. Still others desperately clung to the ship's deck as it lifted into the air.

In the ship's radio room, the radio operator sent an urgent message. "Have struck an iceberg. We are badly damaged," the message read. A second message included the distress signal SOS.

The closest ship that responded, the *Carpathia*, would reach the *Titanic* in several hours, but that was not soon enough. Two-and-a-half hours after the *Titanic* struck an iceberg, it sank and disappeared, lost beneath the icy surface of the North Atlantic Ocean.



Do You Know?

Although it has never been proved beyond doubt, suspicions remain to this day that another ship was nearby. The *Californian* might have been as close as five miles, but was definitely no more than 19 miles away from the *Titanic*. Its crew, however, claimed not to have seen *Titanic*'s distress flares. In addition, the *Californian*'s radio had been turned off, so it never received *Titanic*'s SOS.

Rescued

In the early-morning hours of Monday, April 15, the *Carpathia* arrived to rescue the *Titanic*'s exhausted and grief-stricken survivors. About 700 people had survived in the few lifeboats, but about 1,500 had perished. Most had not drowned, however. Floating in their life vests, most had died from the extremely cold temperatures of the North Atlantic.



The front page was filled with the *Titanic*'s story.

The world was stunned by the loss of the *Titanic*. How could such a magnificent ship, one that was called "unsinkable," go down so quickly? Several decades later, many questions would be answered.



The *Carpathia*



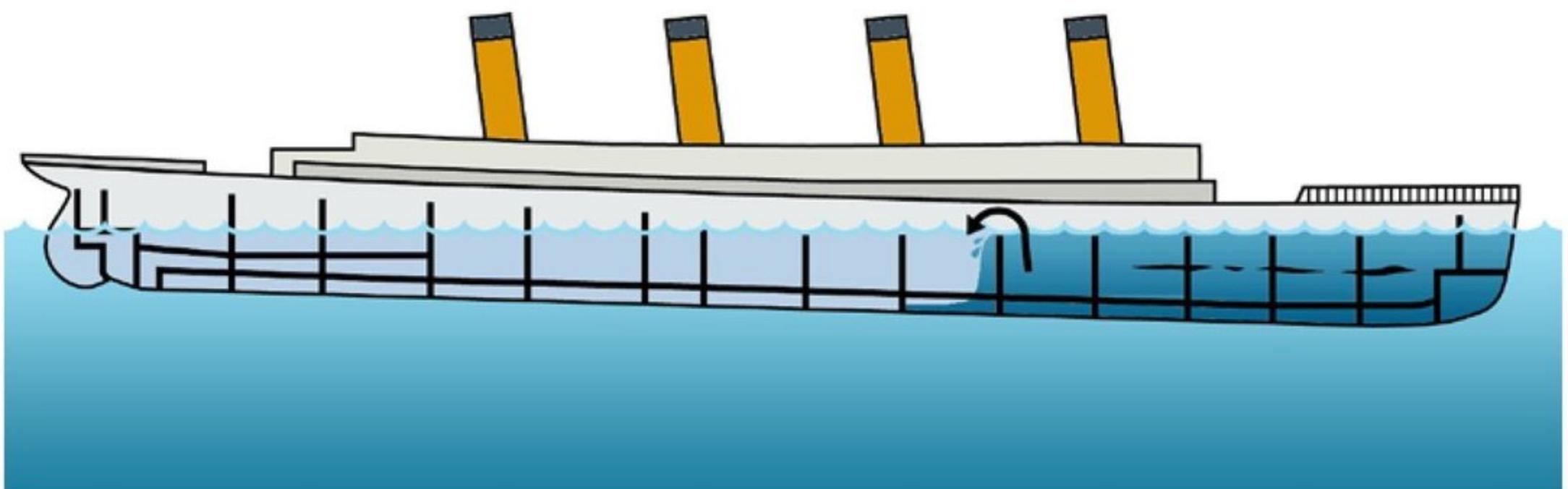
The bow of the *Titanic* at the bottom of the North Atlantic Ocean

Found!

In 1985, something extraordinary happened. The *Titanic* was found about four kilometers (2.5 mi) beneath the sea at the bottom of the North Atlantic Ocean. Scientists could finally find their answers about how the ship sank so quickly.

Scientists sent robotic devices to explore and videotape the wreckage. The ship's ghostly form appeared eerily on the video monitors, its front railing recognizable, even after seventy years below water.

Scientists confirmed that the ship had broken into two parts. But what about the hole made by the iceberg? Buried in the sand of the ocean floor, it could not be seen. Therefore, scientists had to rely on sonar—waves of sound that bounce off surfaces. The sound waves helped the scientists discover that the iceberg had not cut a huge gash in *Titanic's* side, as first suspected.



The compartments were open at the top, allowing water to flood from one to the next.

Instead, the iceberg had made several small holes which, when added together, equaled only about the same area as a doorway. In addition, the holes were higher up on the ship than people had thought. These smaller, higher holes caused the ship's compartments to fill very quickly with water, which ultimately caused the ship to sink.

Titanic's Legacy

Because of the *Titanic*, many lessons were learned and new rules were applied to make ships safer. Today, a ship must have enough lifeboats for all its passengers, and

lifeboat drills must be conducted so everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency. Ships must also keep their radios on 24 hours a day. And the International Ice Patrol, an organization that keeps track of the location of icebergs, was established.



Lifeboats on a modern ship

The *Titanic* was a grand ship, and her story is just as grand. The legacy of the *Titanic* lives on in the memories of the lives lost, the lessons learned by the tragedy, and the changes that such a tragedy brought to sea travel.

Glossary

contraptions (<i>n.</i>)	interesting, unfamiliar devices (p. 5)
dire (<i>adj.</i>)	terribly bad (p. 10)
frantically (<i>adj.</i>)	acting wildly with emotion (p. 10)
magnificent (<i>adj.</i>)	beautiful and impressive (p. 4)
ominously (<i>adv.</i>)	in a threatening or foreboding way (p. 8)
steerage (<i>n.</i>)	the lowest part of the ship where the poorest passengers rode (p. 6)

Index

Andrews, Thomas, 9	North Atlantic
<i>Carpathia</i> , 11, 12	Ocean, 7, 8, 11–13
iceberg, 8, 11, 14, 15	Southampton, 5, 7, 8
International Ice Patrol, 15	
New York, 5	

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Page 3: Molly Brown, nicknamed "Unsinkable," was one of many famous people on board the Titanic. She survived.

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