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NOAA—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—visited *Titanic* during 2004. Among other things, researchers found the bow of the once-great ship is deteriorating. Image online, courtesy NOAA / Institute for Exploration / University of Rhode Island (NOAA / IFE / URI), via NOAA's website.

As artifacts are recovered from the slowly disintegrating ship, some folks, like Dr. Ballard, think *Titanic* should remain undisturbed.

With considerable funding behind him, Ballard is pioneering a way for people to view the great shipwrecks online. Using the power of technology and the Internet, he is trying to balance the competing issues of historical inquiry and public curiosity with the need to protect and respect wreckage sites.

Is it better to view a pair of shoes where the body fell, for example, or to view those same shoes as they sit on a museum shelf?

Ballard's first project, ironically, is *Britannic*, the last of the three White Star sister ships. Lying in about 400 feet of water off the Greek island of Kea in the Aegean Sea, she sank on November 21, 1916. Thirty people died, but the death toll could have been much worse.

During World War I, she was converted from *RMS Britannic* to *HMHS Britannic* - His Majesty's Hospital Ship. On her way to the port of Lemnos, to pick up 3,600 wounded men, she either struck a landmine, planted by *U-73*, or she was torpedoed. At the time, many of her portholes were open. Scientists are certain that is why she sank in about 55 minutes.

Slightly larger than her sister ship *Titanic*, the *Britannic* also sank bow first. But there was something curious about the way she died.

Sinking bow first (perpendicular to the surface of the sea as her sister was positioned in her final moments), *Britannic's* 883 horizontal feet became 883 vertical feet. She became, at that moment, deeper than the sea - so to speak. As her bow touched the bottom of the sea, it could not support the weight of the entire ship. It cracked under the strain.

She lies now, on her side, with a cracked bow as her sister lies in the North Atlantic, broken in two.

NOTE: Of the many *Titanic* Internet sites, a few really stand out. They are:

- *Titanic* at Two A.M. - the source of Paul J. Quinn's terrific illustrations

- Go on-line with the Discovery Channel to [view the *Titanic* wreckage](#).
- Father Browne's photographic [collection](#).
- A huge archive of photos is available at the [Ulster Folk Museum](#).
- [BBC Archive](#) - Survivors tell their stories
- The entire proceedings of both the British and American hearings are on-line, thanks to the [Titanic Inquiry Project](#).

[2nd Officer Lightoller's](#) granddaughter has recently revealed what her grandfather never told anyone except his wife. It makes for interesting reading (and lots of questions).

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-REST-OF-THE-STORY-Fatal-Voyage-The-Titanic>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

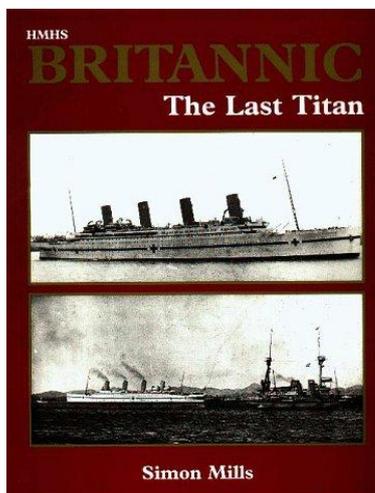
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-REST-OF-THE-STORY-Fatal-Voyage-The-Titanic>

Questions 2 Ponder

Should Artifacts from Shipwrecks Be Salvaged?

Do you think it is better to leave shipwrecks, and their artifacts, undisturbed—or—do you think specialists should raise sunken ships, or at least retrieve some of their artifacts, so they can be displayed in museums? Explain your position.

Media Stream

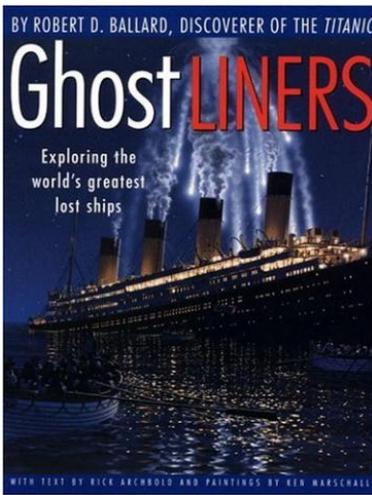


HMHS Britannic: The Last Titan - by Simon Mills

Image online, courtesy the [amazon.com](#) website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/HMHS-Britannic-The-Last-Titan-by-Simon-Mills>



Ghost Liners - by Robert D. Ballard

Image online, courtesy the amazon.com website.

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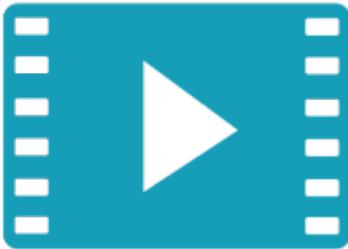
Charles Lightoller - A Family Story

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Doomed Ships - Early 20th Century

Video online, courtesy YouTube.

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