

The Passengers and Classes

On April 10, 1912, the first passengers boarded the ship in Southampton. The *Titanic* was set to sail first to Cherbourg, France then to Queenstown, Ireland and then finally on to New York in the United States.

The *Titanic* was built to serve three classes. Each class had its own gangway to board the ship that led to their corresponding deck. The classes received different treatment aboard the ship and much of the ship was segregated.

First class passengers were greeted and escorted to their rooms. Third class passengers were met by a medical officer to make sure that any passengers emigrating to America did not have health problems. They were not escorted to their rooms, and there was some frustration amongst stewards and third class passengers as many did not speak English.



Margaret Tobin Brown

There were an estimated 1,324 passengers on board, with more than half being third class passengers. Tickets for the *Titanic* varied on the size and location of the room chosen. The average cost for a first class ticket was £86 which is around \$430.00 in U.S. dollars at the time. A second class ticket would roughly cost £13 or \$65.00 while a third class ticket averaged £7 (\$35.00). However, there were even more expensive rooms for first class passengers. A two room suite cost £660 which would be over \$3,000!

On the ship there were about 100 children in all three classes. Eleven year old Billy Carter and his fourteen year old sister, Lucille, were said to be the richest children aboard. They were returning to their home in Philadelphia after going to boarding school in England for a year.

First class rooms were lavishly decorated and much more spacious than the other classes. There were two parlor suites that had their own private decks, two bedrooms, and a private bathroom.

Bathrooms were still a luxury in that time and some of the first class passengers had to share bathrooms.

In third class there were only two bathtubs for over 700 people!

After traveling for a few hours, the *Titanic* made its first stop in Cherbourg, France. There, many of the new passengers to come aboard were rich and famous. John Jacob Astor, who was one of the world's richest men at age 47, boarded the ship along with his new young wife Madeline after their honeymoon. Among the new rich passengers was Benjamin Guggenheim a business man, Scottish aristocrat Sir Cosmo and his wife Lady Duff Gordon who was a fashion designer, the owner of Macy's Isidor Straus and his wife Ida, and Margaret Tobin Brown, an activist and socialite.



Benjamin Guggenheim

The Passengers and Classes Cont.

The passengers came from many different countries around the world and were traveling for a variety of reasons. Some passengers were traveling to seek better opportunities in America, while others were traveling just for fun. Twelve-year-old Ruth Becker was traveling with her family after her younger brother Richard became sick in India. Doctors told the family that his chances of survival would be better in America. The family's second class cabin could sleep the family



Dorothy Gibson

of four and contained either single beds or bunk beds.

Another well known first class passenger was silent film star Dorothy Gibson. She had been vacationing in Paris and booked a ticket aboard the *Titanic* to travel back to America. After surviving the sinking, she went on to star in the silent film *Saved from the Titanic* and even wore the dress she was wearing the night of the actual sinking. More than half of all the passengers aboard the *Titanic* were in

third class. However, their accommodations were no where near as extravagant as first, or even second, class. Third class passengers were restricted to only areas for the third class, with short barred gates to prevent them from leaving these areas.

While rooms in third class were simply furnished, some could accommodate up to ten people. This would have been ideal for the Sage family who were traveling from England to Florida. The family included two parents and nine children!

Prior to the *Titanic's* voyage, there were several rumored predictions that foresaw the ship's fate. One of the predictions actually came from passenger William T. Stead. Stead was an English journalist traveling in first class. In 1892 Stead wrote a fictional story about an ocean liner captained by Captain Smith that struck an iceberg and sank in the North Atlantic sea.



Ruth Becker



William T. Stead