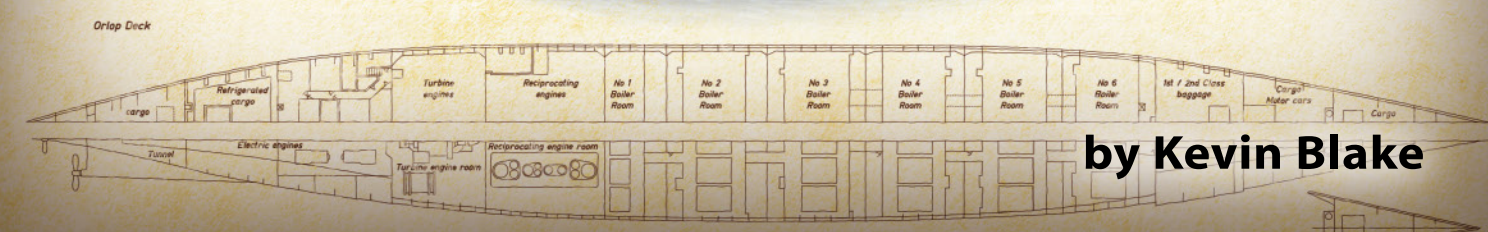


TITANICA

Creating Titanic

The Ship of Dreams



by Kevin Blake

Credits

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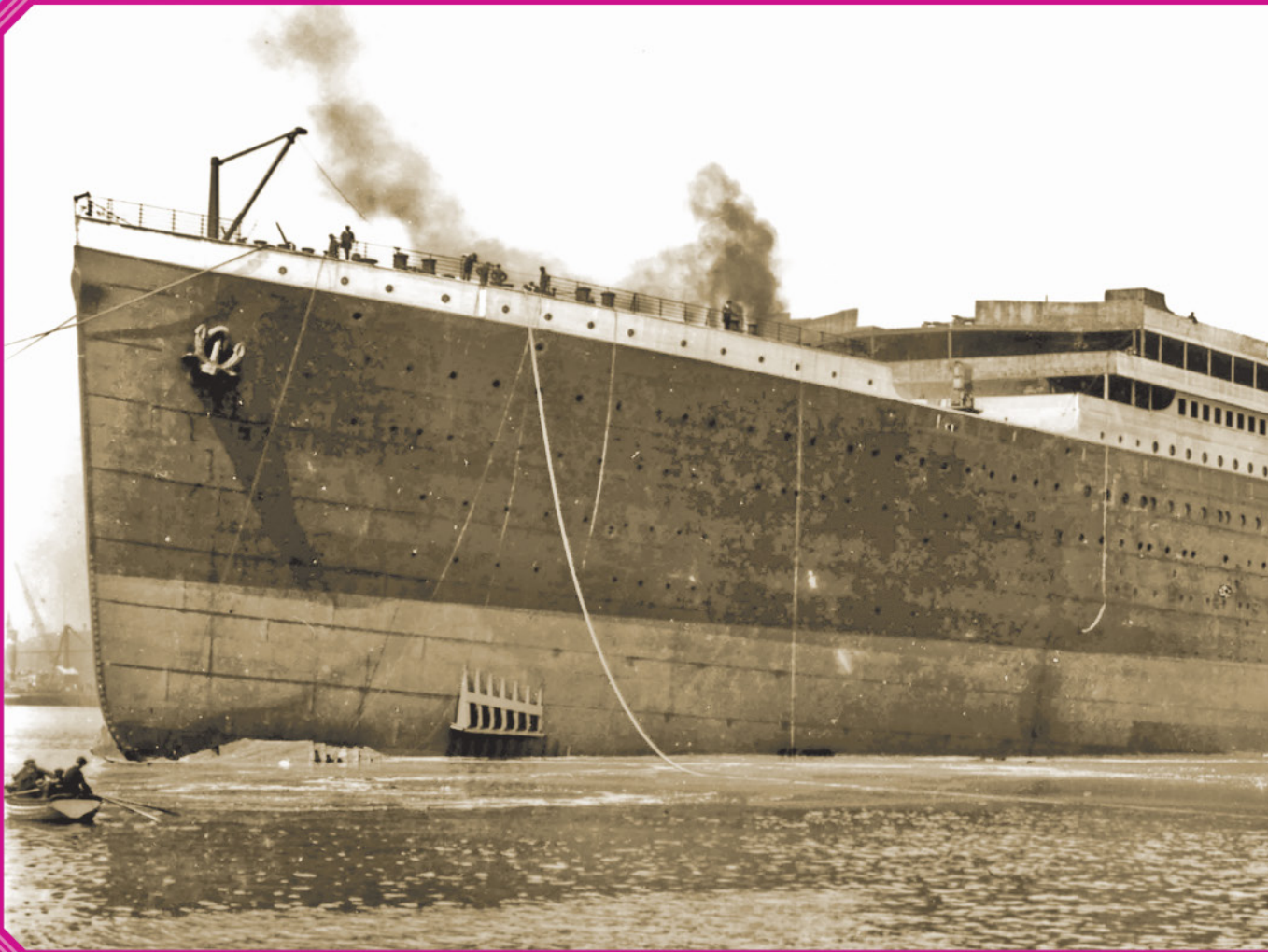
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CONTENTS

Launched!	4
Sea Race	6
Dreaming Big	8
Where to Build?	10
Army of Workers.	12
The Skeleton and Skin	14
The Ship's Muscles	16
A Floating Palace	18
New Technology	20
Safety First?	22
Lack of Lifeboats.	24
Setting Sail	26
The Ship of Dreams	28
Glossary	30
Bibliography	31
Read More	31
Learn More Online	31
Index.	32
About the Author.	32

LAUNCHED!

On May 31, 1911, thousands of excited people crammed into a **shipyard** in Belfast, Ireland. They were there to watch the empty **hull** of RMS *Titanic* enter the water for the very first time. Brass bands played while dazzling red rockets exploded in the sky. Proud workers hugged their children as they pointed at the **massive** ship they had helped build.



The *Titanic* was 882.5 feet (269 m) long—almost as long as 3 football fields—and would be taller than a 10-story building. The ship weighed 46,328 tons (42,028 mt), or more than 8,000 elephants! Workers had covered the *Titanic* with 22 tons (20 mt) of soap, grease, and oil to help it slide out of its **berth** and into a sea **inlet**. In just 62 seconds, the giant **ocean liner** was floating for the very first time. It was the largest moving object the world had ever seen!

The *Titanic* slides into the water on launch day. It would be another ten months of work before the *Titanic* was completely finished and ready to set sail on her first trip.



An invitation to the launch of the *Titanic*



The official name of the ship was the RMS *Titanic*. RMS stands for "Royal Mail Steamer." The *Titanic* received this name because it could carry mail and cargo from Great Britain around the world.

SEA RACE

Why had such a gigantic ship been built? In the early 1900s, before jet travel existed, the fastest way to cross the Atlantic Ocean was on a steamship. During that time, millions of **immigrants** looking for a better life boarded ships headed for America. A smaller number of wealthy people also traveled by ship for business or on **luxurious** vacations.



In the early 1900s, steamships had three categories of **passengers**. First-class passengers paid the most for their tickets and had the best accommodations. Second-class passengers had more basic rooms. Third-class, or **steerage**, passengers were housed below deck and had fewer **amenities**.

Travel brochures encouraged wealthy people to set sail on vacations at sea.

With the number of passengers increasing in the 1900s, there was a huge demand for bigger, faster, and fancier ships. In 1906, a shipping company called the Cunard Line built the fastest ocean liner in the world—the RMS *Lusitania*. How could any other shipping company compete with the *Lusitania*?

The *Lusitania* could carry passengers from Liverpool, England, to New York City in about five days.



A large crowd of European immigrants aboard an ocean liner



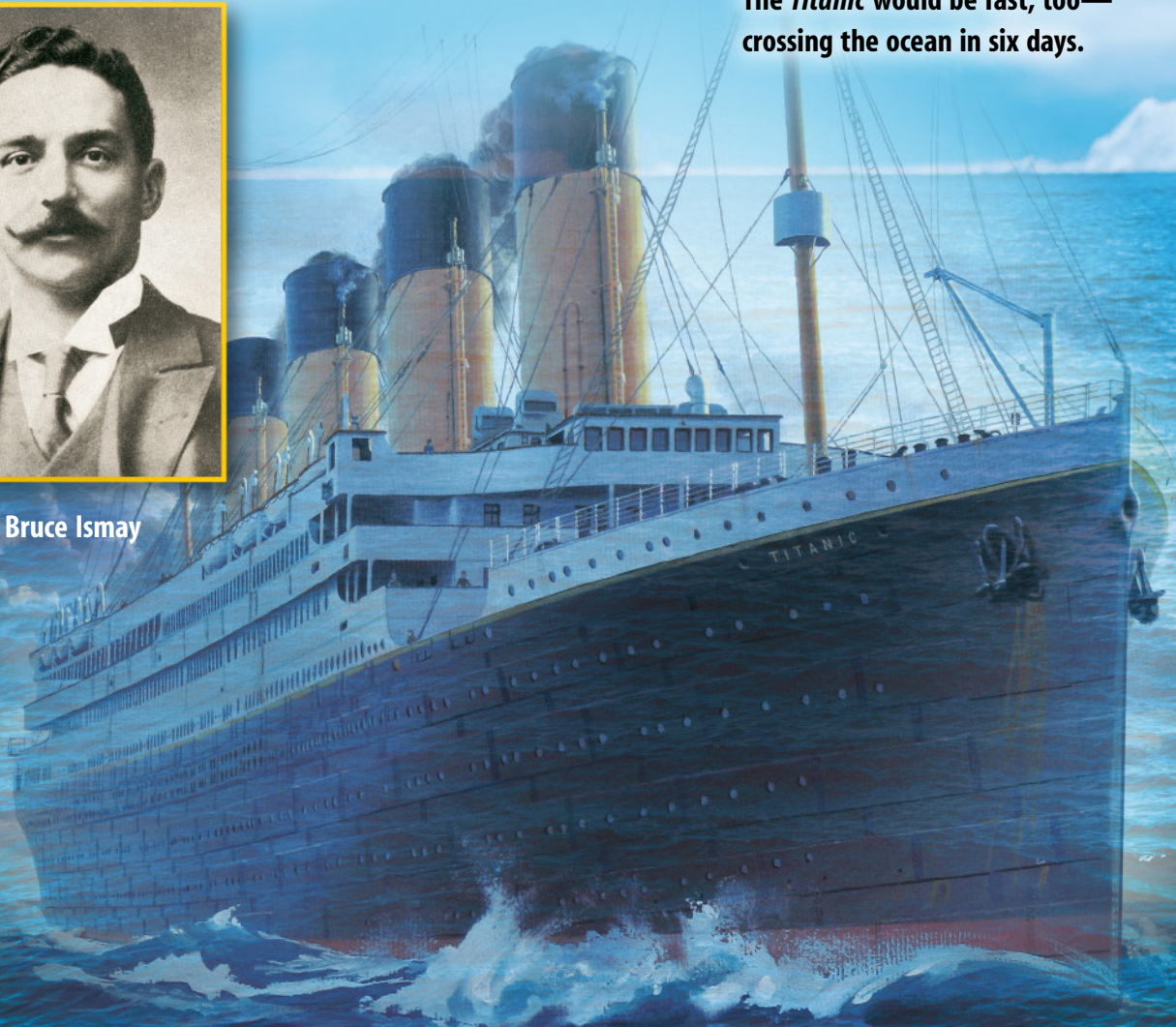
DREAMING BIG

J. Bruce Ismay, the chairman of the White Star Line, which was Cunard's biggest **rival**, had an exciting idea. He would construct the largest, most powerful ocean liner in the world. It would carry thousands of passengers and be so luxurious that wealthy people would feel as if they were traveling in a floating **mansion**. He would call his ship the *Titanic*.

The *Titanic* would be fast, too—crossing the ocean in six days.

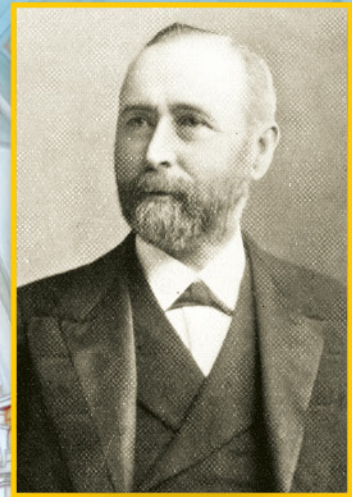


J. Bruce Ismay

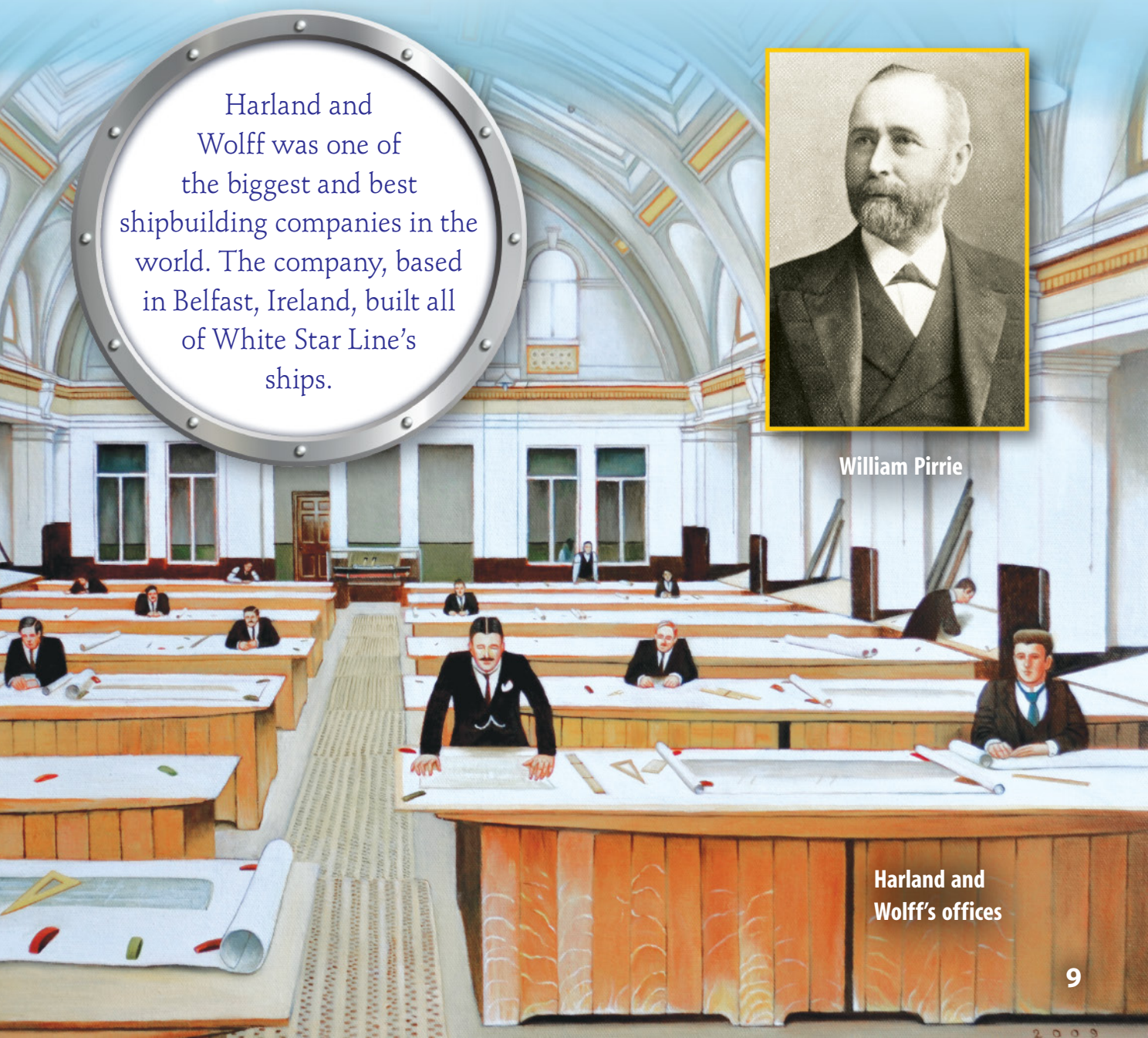


In 1907, Ismay met William Pirrie, the head of the Harland and Wolff shipbuilding company, for dinner at his London home. Over cigars and wine, Ismay shared his dream of an ocean liner so enormous and fancy that it would outshine the *Lusitania*. Pirrie loved the idea, and he knew the perfect **architect** to build the ship—his nephew, Thomas Andrews.

Harland and Wolff was one of the biggest and best shipbuilding companies in the world. The company, based in Belfast, Ireland, built all of White Star Line's ships.



William Pirrie



Harland and Wolff's offices

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