

Search For The Titanic

Salvage of the wreck was suggested almost immediately after the sinking. Witnesses reported seeing the stern section up-end and then fall back to horizontal before sinking – this seemed to indicate that the ship had broken into two pieces, but it was difficult to be certain. Many people were convinced that a ship so strong must have sunk in one piece.

It was also difficult to find where the Titanic lay, two miles under the ocean. How far would the ship have drifted as she sank? What deep ocean valleys and rocky outcrops would hide the wreck? The search area was enormous and the weather often atrocious.

Many searches were made, but until the 1980s there were no ships or machines that were capable of searching the depths of the ocean for Titanic.

An expedition to find the wreck site of Titanic left Woods Hole, Massachusetts, USA on board the research vessel Knorr in August 1985. The expedition was led by Dr. Robert Ballard. The night of the 31st August looked like being as uneventful as any other to the scientists on board Knorr.

For two months, they had watched video footage of the ocean floor relayed by the unmanned submersible vessel Argo. Just after midnight on September 1st small pieces of metal began to appear on the monitor screens.

At first the team only saw the wreckage of a boiler, but it was instantly recognizable as one of those fitted to Titanic. The camera followed a trail of objects until suddenly the huge black shadow of the ships hull loomed into view.