

The Birth of a Titan

On a still summer evening in 1907 a dinner party was taking place in the Belgrave Square home of Lord William Pirrie, chairman of the Belfast Shipyard Harland and Wolff.

The chief guest was J. Bruce Ismay, chairman of the White Star Line and during dinner the shipbuilder and the businessman discussed the fierce competition for the lucrative North Atlantic Passenger trade.

The White Star Line was a successful company, but had not had a new ship built for five years. Ismay wanted to build some fine new vessels to compete for trade with a weekly service from Southampton to New York. After dinner the two men began to sketch plans for three magnificent and luxurious liners, which would later become Olympic, Titanic and Britannic.