

A Shattered DREAM

WHEN *TITANIC* EMBARKED on its maiden voyage, the ship brought with it the wide-eyed dreams of a generation. Just a few short years later, the world would be plunged into a war that would spawn unimaginable devastation across the globe. But on the morning of April 10, 1912, when *Titanic* pulled away from the dock in Southampton, the soaring aspirations of man's achievement knew no bounds. Anything seemed possible.

Titanic took on passengers at Southampton, Cherbourg, and Queenstown before setting out for New York with about 2,229 people aboard. By all accounts, the voyage was a pleasant one. The ship was making good time, and by the evening of April 14, the weather had turned clear, calm, and very cold. And then, at 11:40 p.m., the dream of *Titanic* was shattered with just three words: "Iceberg dead ahead."

Titanic was doomed. First Officer William Murdoch, the officer on the bridge, tried to turn the ship to avoid collision, but *Titanic* scraped the iceberg on the starboard side, damaging nearly 300 feet of the ship's hull and puncturing six of the sixteen watertight compartments. As the forward compartments began to flood, Thomas Andrews, the ship's designer, told Captain Smith the *Titanic* could not stay afloat. Smith gave the order to call for help, and later to load the lifeboats.

The water dragged the front half of the ship under, lifting the stern aloft and exposing the three massive propellers. Eventually, *Titanic* broke in half under its own weight. The bow plunged downward, while the stern briefly righted itself. As water poured in, the ship's back half was engulfed by the frigid sea, finally disappearing beneath the waves at 2:20 a.m., two hours and 40 minutes after it first struck the iceberg. The unimaginable had happened. The unsinkable ship had sunk.