

Titanic's British Claim Put Forward

By Seawise & Titanic

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News about British view of recent court case involving RMS Titanic Inc.

Press release

On behalf of Douglas J. Faulkner Woolley, owner of rights to RMS Titanic and Queen Elizabeth (Seawise University)

Correcting A Common Myth

As we were unaware of the court case of 26th -30th October 2009 in the USA involving alleged claims by RMS Titanic Inc. to ownership of artefacts taken from the wreck of RMS Titanic until it was already underway, we were unable to attend the hearing and have had to rely on second hand information. However, through this information it appears that many people in the United States are under the impression that the liner RMS Titanic was American owned. While certain papers have been temporary left in their country in the past in trust, that is all they were. J.P. Morgan was a major investor in the building of the ship but never owned her, nor the White Star Line (there are no court papers of any description relating to any non-British ownership of this company). She also flew under the British ensign, the most obvious sign of national ownership. Like her sister ships, Britannic and Olympic, Titanic was in a position to have been commandeered by the British government for troop movement or hospital purposes during the two world wars if she had stayed afloat. These records should be available through British wartime naval records.

The reason this point has been made is because it appears it has been used to make an alleged claim for ownership. A part of the hull on American soil is also not an argument for ownership. The wreck is also not off the USA east coast, which has also been mentioned, being in international waters and closest to British owned territory of Canada.

This British built, British designed, British registered ship remains British property.

The State Of The Wreck

It appears that RMS Titanic Inc. used the court case to announce a further salvage operation on the wreck of the ship for next year to maintain the salvors-in-possession status they should never have been granted through the US courts. We hold an affidavit for the liners RMS Titanic and Queen Elizabeth (Seawise University) dated 1984, a full decade before their alleged claim was first processed through the same courts.

In this recent case it was made clear that both RMS Titanic Inc. and their parent company, Premier Exhibitions, were in financial problems. We do not see it as coincidental that we were offering to auction our rights to the wreck this week, but as an attempt to detract people from this event happening. A date has yet to be finalised for any auction and it appears that it would be best for both groups to work together for the benefit of each other instead of selling Mr. Woolley's rights to an unknown entity who may cause damage to all of us. Without full court backing and no reward for salvage performed in the past, it seems unlikely RMS Titanic Inc. will raise enough funds for their next expedition.

The state of the wreck is also in question. Although there is known damage and a certain amount of deterioration, we have seen pictures that do not appear to back this up. The contours look to be the same as in 1912, windows are still in place and there are few signs of rust. Over the last month reports have gradually changed from slow deterioration to having nothing left at all in 50 years. As we have not checked the wreck for ourselves and RMS Titanic Inc's affidavit does not state any direct right to enter the wreck herself, we are unsure where this 'research' has come from. The stories may, in fact, be correct, in which case it would be hazardous for anyone to approach the site at all. We want to find the situation out for ourselves and why secrets are still untold about what happened all those years ago. We also feel that relations of those who lost their lives on board should know the truth by seeing for themselves whatever can

be salvaged of the ship herself, by presenting the furnished hull as a museum on land. We are aware there are people who think she should remain a grave but a grave has little purpose if it cannot be witnessed. It is for this reason we want people to see a lasting memorial for those people who deserve to be remembered, that is not only available to those who have enough money to visit the resting site.

Timothy L. Coyle
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UK based salvage company based in Essex. Titanic and Queen Elizabeth (Seawise University) rights owner since 1984.

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Tags	titanic, legal, owner, recent, USA, britain
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