

The Case for Restaurant Galley Skylights on *Titanic*

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Introduction

With the recent release of their deck plans, Titanic Honor and Glory (THG) has included a number of items which have not been confirmed on *Titanic* but which they have “extrapolated” from other evidence. One of these is the speculative presence of skylights on the roof of the fourth funnel deckhouse which served the restaurant galley below on “B” deck. This article will make the case that these skylights did exist on *Titanic*.

Logic of Investigation

The proposal by THG that the restaurant galley skylights may have existed on *Titanic* is an extrapolation from *Olympic* evidence. **There is no photo, plan, or documentary evidence that these skylights existed on *Titanic*.** However, there are numerous items which we accept as being on *Titanic* because they were present on early *Olympic*. What makes analysis more difficult is that there are also numerous items which were present on early *Olympic* which were *not* present on *Titanic*. So, extrapolation from *Olympic* to *Titanic* is not automatic.

I decided to investigate whether we could reasonably infer the presence of galley skylights on *Titanic* by interpolation rather than extrapolation. Extrapolation is used to predict a future inclusion of an item based on its presence on an earlier ship. Interpolation is used to infer the inclusion of an item on a ship when you have earlier *and* later examples. To use interpolation to infer the presence of an item on *Titanic* we would need evidence from *Olympic and Britannic*. *Olympic* and *Britannic* thus will be examined to see if there is evidence for the galley skylights.

Olympic Evidence

From the beginning, *Olympic* had skylights over the restaurant galley on “B” deck. The early skylights had an air intake on their aft sides which ducted into the light and air trunk to the restaurant galley. Figure 1 shows this combination skylight/natural draft ventilator.

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Figure 1

Combination skylight/ventilator over early *Olympic's* restaurant galley

During *Olympic's* 1913 refit, the ventilation of the restaurant galley was upgraded. As part of the upgrade, the skylight/ventilator combinations were replaced with sealed, non-opening skylights. Figure 2. Shows the modified port skylight on *Olympic* in 1918.



Figure 2

Restaurant galley skylight on HMT *Olympic* in 1918

The ventilator and skylight configuration forward of the fourth funnel in 1918 was the same as it was after the 1913 refit. Figure 3 is a multi-view drawing of one of the replacement restaurant galley skylights. These skylights were steel and were non-opening.

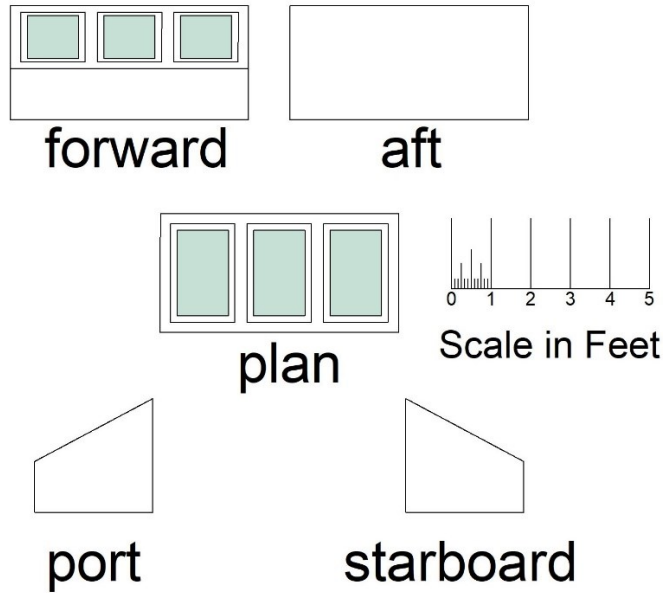


Figure 3

Multi-view drawing of restaurant galley skylights

Britannic Evidence

The first item of *Britannic* evidence is that there was a restaurant galley in the same location as on *Olympic*. Figure 4 shows a general arrangement plan segment of *Britannic's* "B" deck showing the restaurant galley.

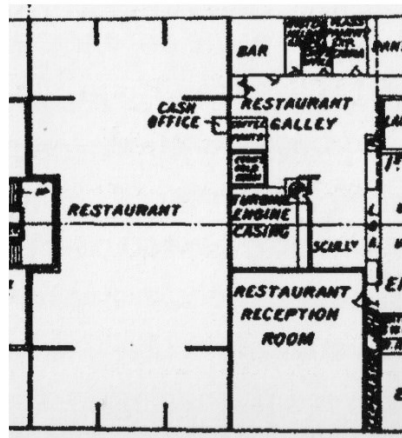


Figure 4

Restaurant galley on *Britannic's* "B" deck

The most important piece of *Britannic* evidence is from a *Britannic* fitting-out photo taken in late 1914. At this time *Britannic* and *Olympic* were laid up in Belfast because the Admiralty was not convinced that they would be useful in the war effort. Figure 5 shows the photo of *Britannic* during fitting-out in Belfast with *Olympic* in the background.

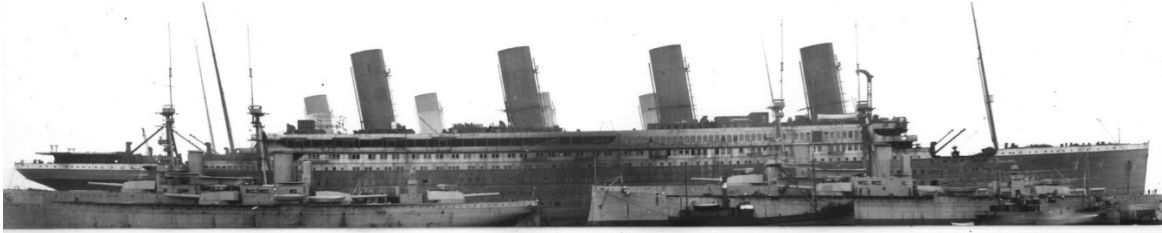


Figure 5

Britannic during fitting-out in Belfast late 1914

The crucial evidence is found in a cropped enlargement of the *Britannic* fitting-out photo. Figure 6 shows the area forward of funnel #4.

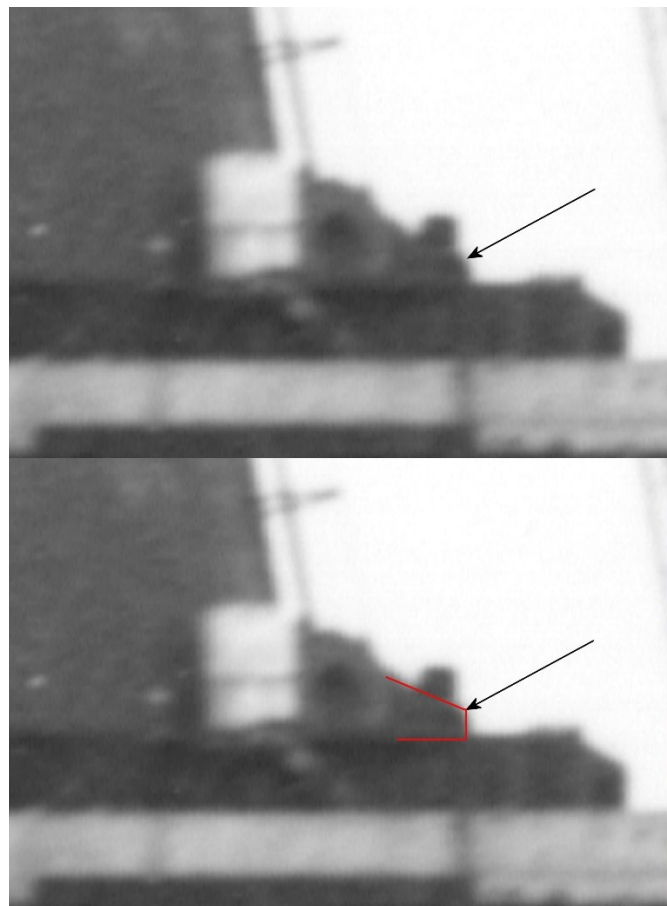


Figure 6

Enlargement of area forward of funnel #4 on *Britannic*

A duplicate image in Figure 6 has this structure in question outlined in red. The structure has a thermotank ventilator partially superimposed over it. There also appears to be something smaller behind the structure with a rectangular profile. I believe structure pointed to by the arrow is a restaurant galley skylight.

Special Note: The *Britannic* fitting out photo is one that I believe that has been misinterpreted. The object which I have identified as likely being a skylight has been rejected by some because it is not in the proper location and orientation. I agree. The reason it is not is because this is a stage of fitting out where equipment has been pre-positioned on the deckhouse roofs prior to installation. Both the thermotank ventilator and the object I have identified as a skylight are not in their final installation positions.

Analysis

There is irrefutable evidence on *Olympic* of a restaurant galley on “B” deck and skylights serving the galley directly above it on the roof of the fourth funnel deckhouse forward of the funnel. There is plan evidence of a restaurant galley on *Britannic*. In a fitting-out photo of *Britannic* there is photo evidence of what appears to be a skylight forward of the fourth funnel.

Based on the evidence from both *Olympic* and *Britannic*, I believe it is reasonable to infer the presence of restaurant galley skylights on *Titanic* by interpolation. All three ships had restaurant galleys in the same location. It appears *Olympic* and *Britannic* had skylights on the forward roof of the fourth funnel deckhouse. The only piece of evidence we don’t have for *Titanic* is photo evidence. Figure 7 shows the plan evidence for the restaurant galley on all three ships.

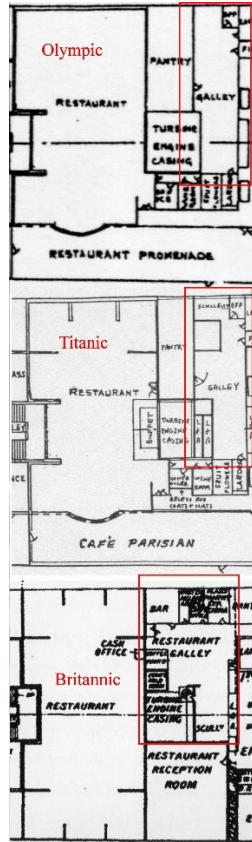


Figure 7

Plan evidence of restaurant galleys on all three *Olympic* class ships

Figure 8 shows drawings of where evidence suggests the restaurant galley skylights and surrounding equipment would be on all three ships of the Olympic class.

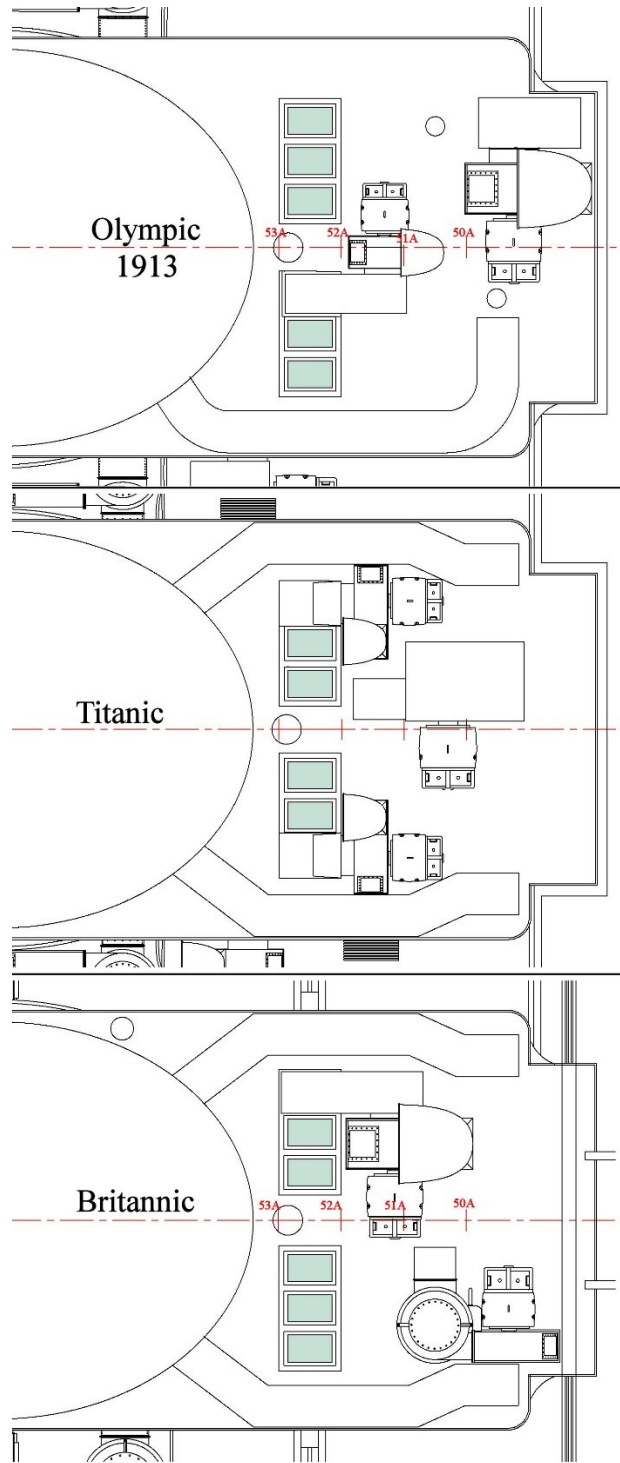


Figure 8

Location of restaurant galley skylights on all three Olympic class ships

Conclusion

Because of evidence from both *Olympic* and *Britannic* showing what appears to be the same skylight configurations over the restaurant galley, I believe it is now reasonable to infer that *Titanic* had the same restaurant galley skylights as her sister ships. Figure 9 show where the skylights would be located on *Titanic*.

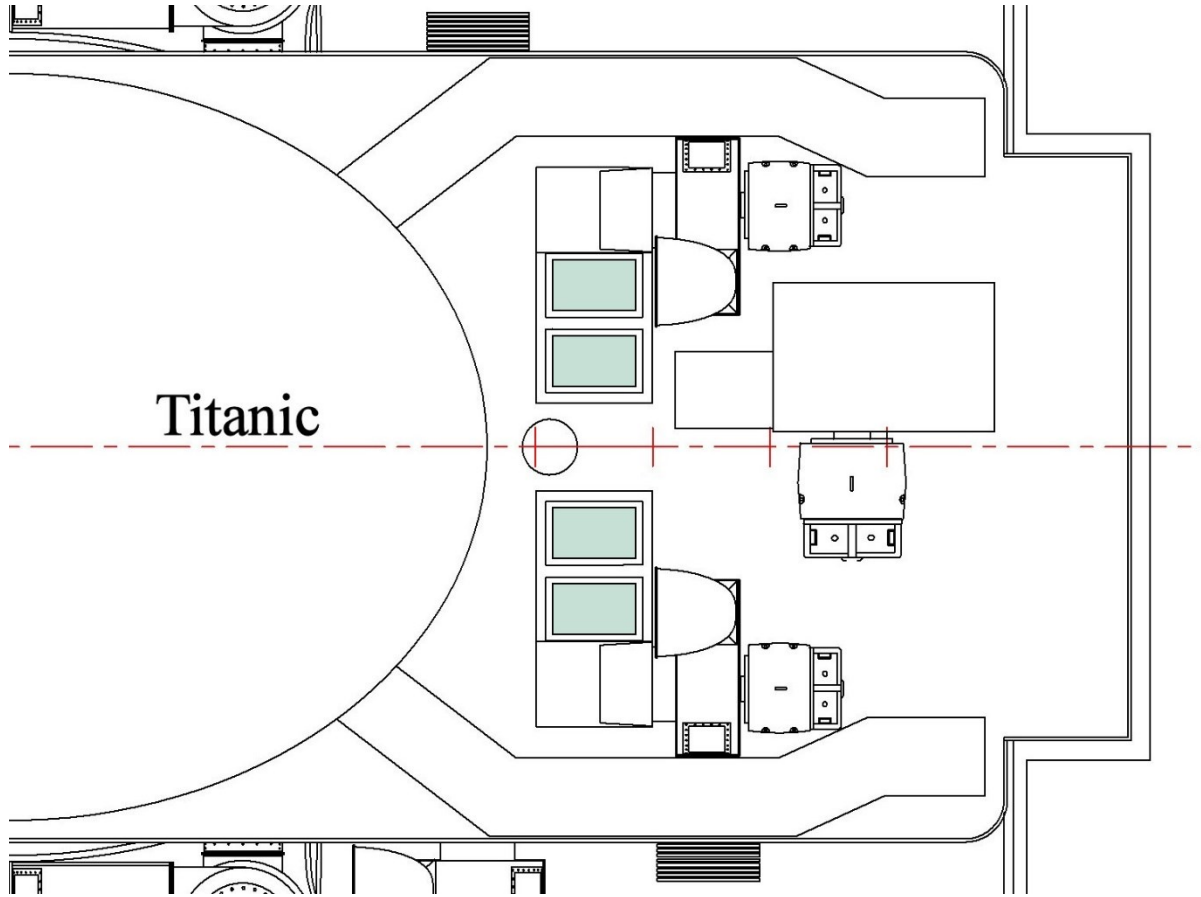


Figure 9

Proposed location of restaurant galley skylights on *Titanic*