

Deckhouse Structures Aft of Titanic's Third Funnel

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is to document recent findings which change our understanding of the structures associated with the aft bulkhead of the deckhouse under Titanic's third funnel. The two structures which were altered as a result of the addition of a crew stairway aft of the deckhouse are the stokehold vent opening and the panel to the pantry hoist gear to starboard of the stokehold vent.

The Crew Stairway and Cover

During Titanic's fitting out after her launch, it was decided to add a crew stairway just aft of the third funnel deckhouse. Figure 1 is a section of Olympic's original boat deck iron plan.

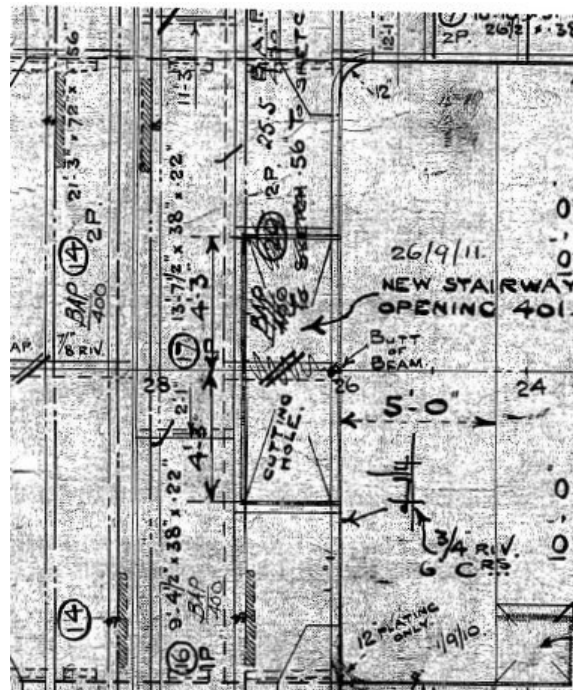


Figure 1

Olympic's original boat deck iron plan

On it can be seen the notation for the addition of the crew stairway. The date of the notation is September 9, 1911. Rather than an open stairway with side bulkheads like those on the forward boat deck, this stairway was provided with a full cover. This same stairway was added to Olympic during her 1912-13 refit. Our best photo of this stairway cover and associated structures is seen in Figure 2 of Olympic which was taken in 1913 shortly after Olympic's refit.

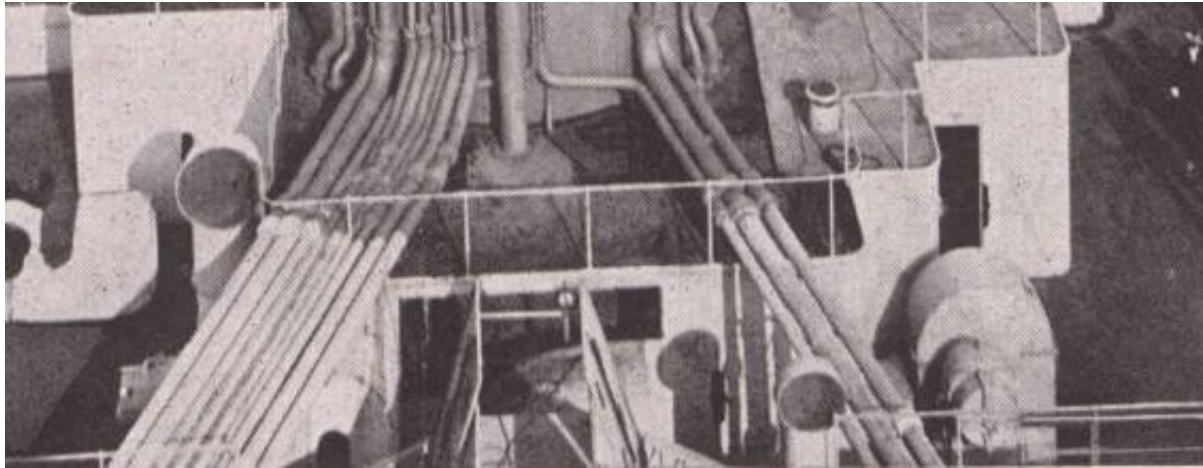


Figure 2

Post 1912-13 Olympic third funnel deckhouse aft

The Stokehold Vent

The aft stokehold vent opening of the third funnel deckhouse can be seen in Figure 2. The stairway cover obstructs part of the stokehold vent opening. The stokehold vent opening has an unusual feature in the upper starboard corner. It appears that there is a "notch" there. Originally, I had thought that this was caused by the stairway door being open in Figure 2. After further study, it appears that they used the aft bulkhead of the deckhouse under the third funnel to form the forward bulkhead of the stairway cover. To form the upper part of the forward bulkhead of the stairway cover, it is believed that they riveted a steel plate to the aft bulkhead of the deckhouse. Figure 3 is a drawing which shows this steel plate highlighted in gray which was riveted to the deckhouse. This riveted plate is what creates the "notch" in the upper starboard corner.

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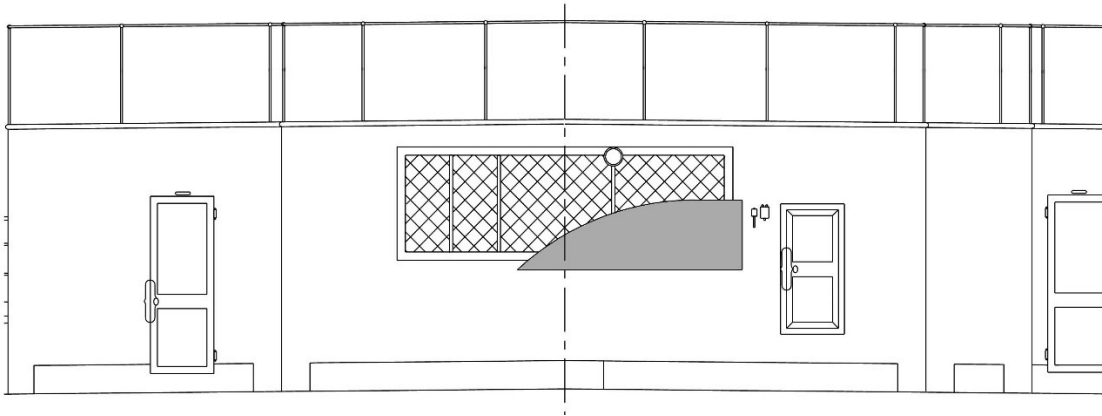


Figure 3

Plate riveted to aft bulkhead

The Pantry Lift Gear Door

To starboard of the stokehold vent opening was a partial length door to the room which housed the lift motor and gear for the pantry lift. The location is shown in Figure 4.

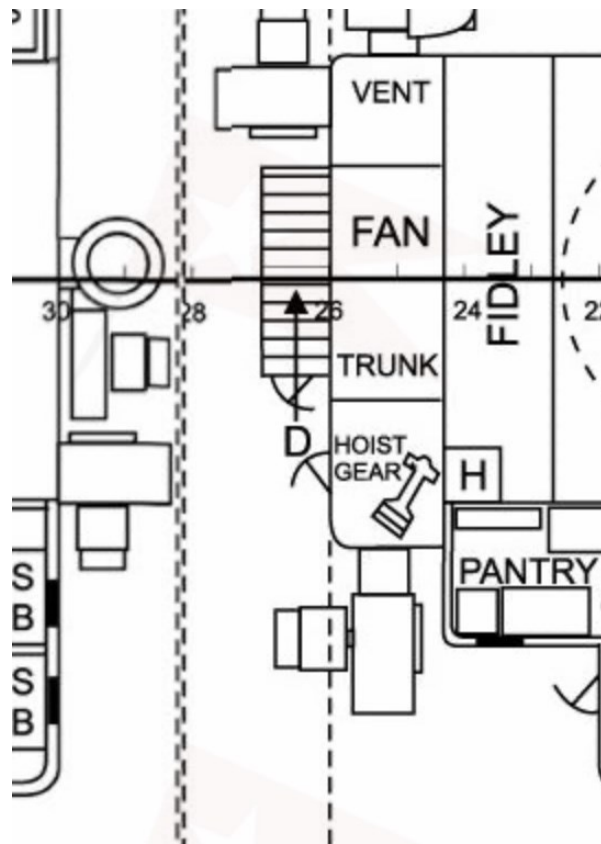


Figure 4

Plan view of pantry hoist gear room

Figure 5 show this area on Olympic during fitting out.



Figure 4

Olympic panel to pantry hoist gear

It can be seen that the opening is not a full-length door but rather a panel. It is thought that this panel was for ventilation purposes to keep the lift motor from overheating. It was originally thought that this would be just a simple steel panel. The 1913 photo in Figure 2 shows a latch plate in the location of this panel. Latch plates are used exclusively with wood doors. Further, it was thought that since this was a wooden door that it must have been changed from a metal panel to a full-length wooden door. The evidence which was discovered which brought new light to this panel is seen in Figure 6. This is from an aerial photo of Olympic in 1923. The boat deck doors in this photo are all painted a dark color. Fortunately, the panel can be seen clearly in this photo and it is not a full-length door. Therefore, the two things we can deduce from this are that this a panel, not a door, and that it is wood.

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Figure 6

Olympic 1923 panel to pantry lift gear

Conclusion

From recent evidence it has been concluded that aft of the deckhouse under Titanic's third funnel, the stokehold opening was not a simple rectangular shape. It was further concluded that the panel to starboard of the stokehold vent was of wood construction and was not a full-length door. The final configuration is seen in Figure 7.

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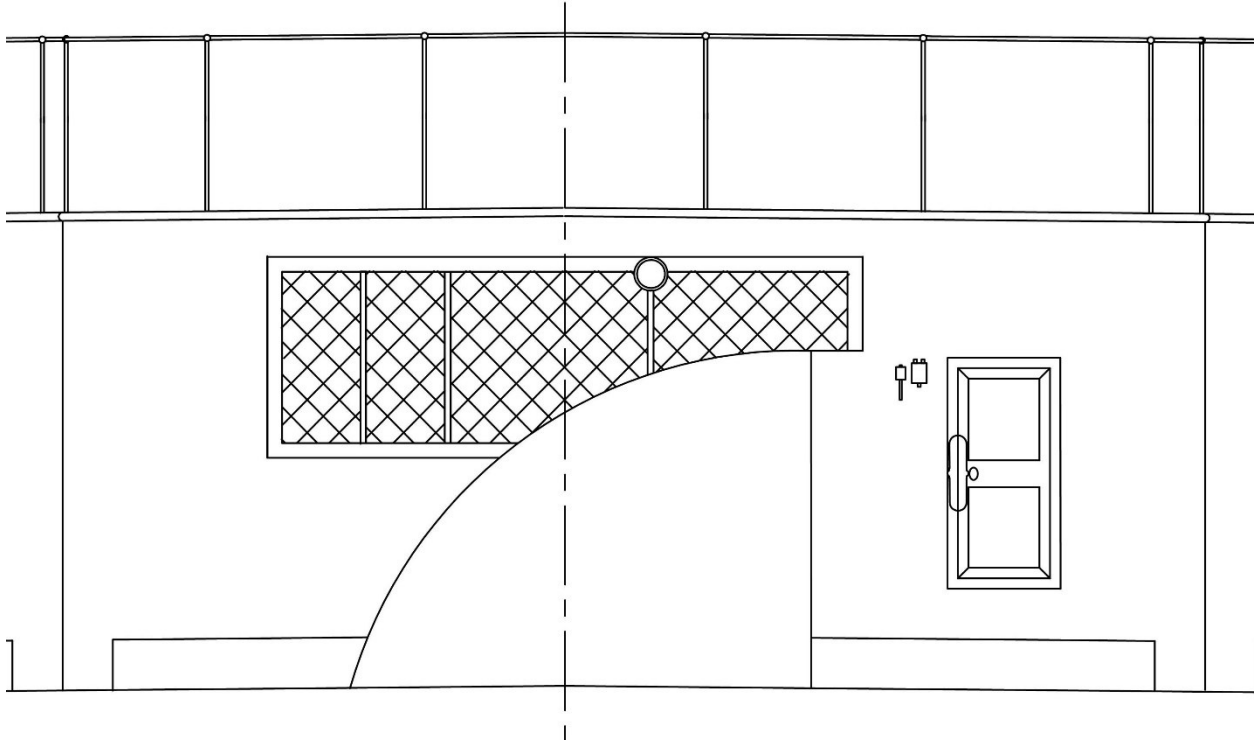


Figure 7

Configuration of Titanic's aft bulkhead of the deckhouse
under the third funnel