

The Corrected Arrangement of Skid Lights on *Titanic's* Officers' Quarters

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Introduction

This article will describe a recent discovery, the magnitude of which is exceedingly rare in *Titanic* research. The arrangement of skid lights on the port and starboard bulkheads of *Titanic's* officers' quarters was originally formulated using available evidence in the early 2000s. Wreck footage at that time was almost devoid of color and clarity. Most of the evidence found was for the starboard side of the officers' quarters deckhouse. Since the A deck staterooms which these skid lights served were mirrored on both port and starboard sides of the fore and aft midline, it was assumed in the absence of definitive evidence that the arrangement of skid lights on the starboard side was mirrored on the port side. This arrangement has been the conventional wisdom for over 20 years, but no longer. Better evidence which had been neglected for a number of years was recently scrutinized and it was found that the arrangement of skid lights on both port and starboard sides of the officers' quarters did not match what had been the conventional wisdom arrangement. This article will serve to document these recent changes.

Acknowledgements

Usually, the Acknowledgements section of an article appears at the end of the article. Because of the exceptional nature of the discovery of the actual arrangement of skid lights on *Titanic's* officers' quarters, I feel it is necessary to highlight the names of the researchers who brought about this discovery before delving into the details of the discovery. My personal involvement has been miniscule. I am writing this article to document the discoveries of others.

Sauli Palokangas – Recently Sauli posted in a Facebook *Titanic* forum his assertion that there was an error regarding the conventional wisdom location of one of the skid lights. Had it not been for Sauli announcing this discovery, it is unknown if or when some other researcher might have discovered the discrepancy with regard to the conventional wisdom. For this, the *Titanic* research community is in Sauli's debt.

Tyler Verdun – Sometimes a discovery is made originally by one researcher and another researcher expands and clarifies the original discovery. To his considerable credit, this is what

Tyler has done for Titanic research. Tyler went back and looked at all the assumptions which were made in the conventional wisdom regarding the skid light placement and found numerous errors which he subsequently corrected. The *Titanic* research community is also in Tyler's debt.

The following researchers played supporting roles in these recent discoveries. This is not to diminish their roles. They provided crucial research evidence, the lack of which would have prevented the full development of these new discoveries. The Titanic research community is also indebted to:

Matt DeWinkleer, Ken Marschall, Cyril Codus, David Tirado, and Steve Hall.

The Structure and Function of *Titanic's* Skid Lights

On *Titanic's* forward A deck there were 14 staterooms which were interior cabins with no portholes for light or air. To remedy this situation "skid lights" were installed on the forward Boat Deck which provided light and air to the interior cabins on A deck below. The skid lights were hinged like opening portholes to allow for the entry of air. Figure 1 shows the interior A deck cabins and the openings in their roofs for skid light ducts (in red).



Figure 1

Interior A deck cabins and roof locations for skid light ducts (in red)

Figure 2 shows an end elevation diagram of a skid light.

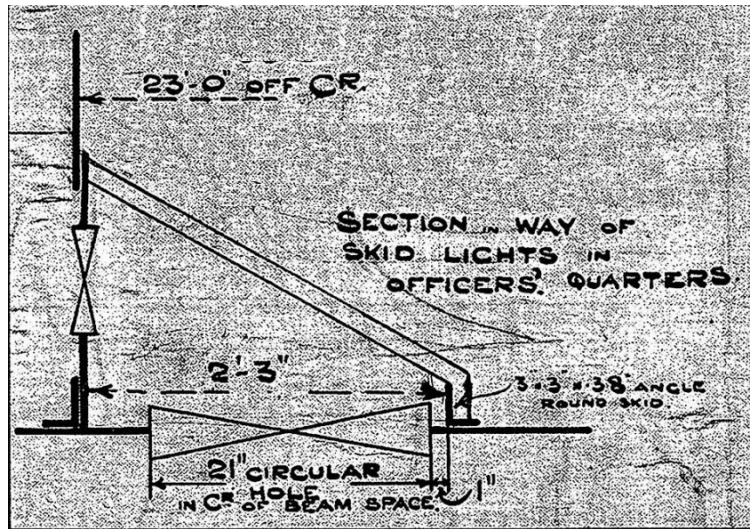


Figure 2

End elevation diagram of skid light and duct

The light and air admitted by the skid lights traveled diagonally within a duct through the officers' quarters to an opening through the boat deck which formed the ceiling of the interior A deck cabins. Figure 3 shows the hinged, framed glass port which was installed at the base of the port and starboard bulkheads of the officers' quarters.



Figure 3

Skid light port as used on *Titanic*

Since the prevailing movement of air was from forward to aft, this movement of air across the face of the open skid light would create a venturi effect which would act to exhaust air from the A deck cabin.

The Revised Locations of *Titanic's* Skid Lights

In order to specify the positions of the individual skid lights more succinctly, the following convention will be used. The skid lights will be numbered on either side of the officers' quarters deckhouse starting with the most forward skid light to the most aft. Each skid light number will be followed by either a "P" or an "S" indicating whether it is found on the port or starboard side.

Figures 4 and 5 show all of the skid lights on both the port and starboard sides of the officers' quarters deckhouse. These skid light locations are the revised locations. The previously described location designations are given for each skid light.

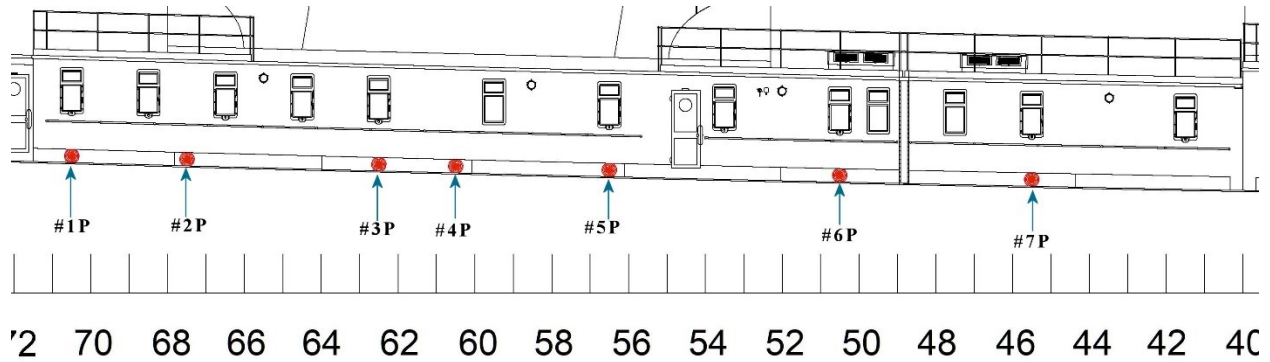


Figure 4

Port revised skid light locations (in red)

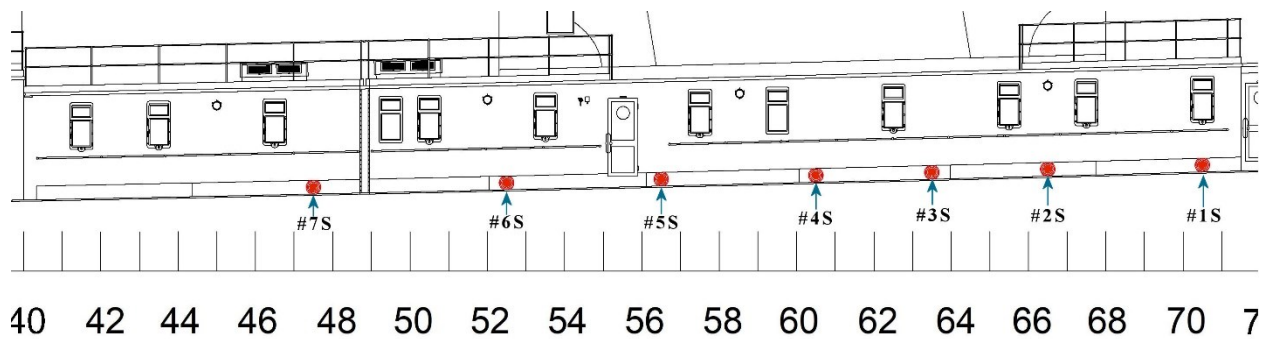


Figure 5

Starboard revised skid light locations (in red)

Documentary Evidence for the Revised Locations of Each Skid Light

In this section, photographic evidence for each of the skid lights will be presented.

#1P

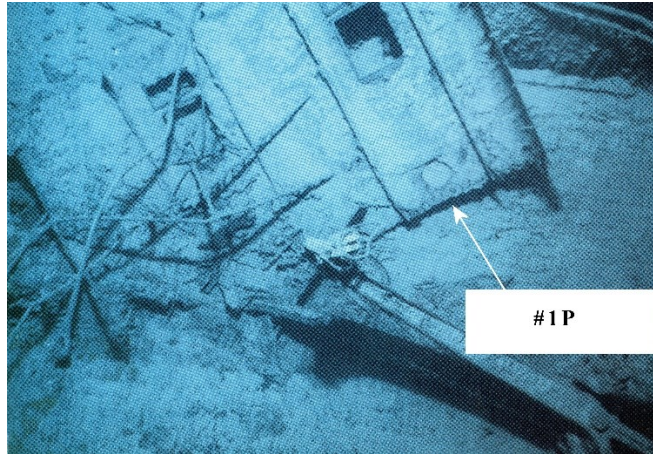


Figure 6

#1P

#2P

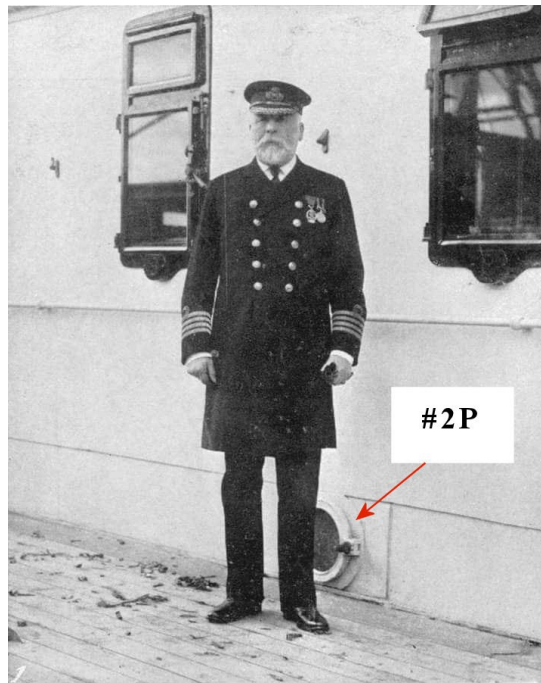


Figure 7

#2P

#3P



Figure 8

#3P

#4P

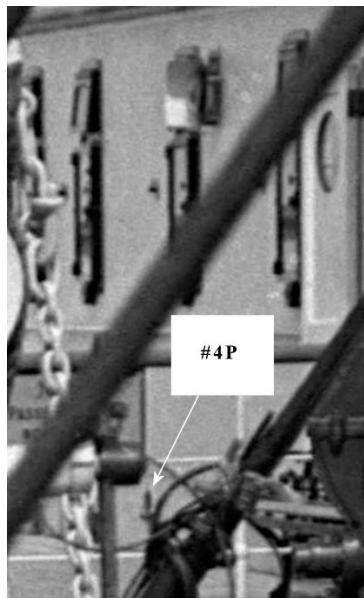


Figure 9

#4P

Note: This area is completely obscured on the wreck. This is the best evidence we have.

#5P



Figure 10

#5P

#6P



Figure 11

#6P

#7P



Figure 12

#7P

#1S



Figure 13

#1S

Note: This photo provides evidence for four starboard skid lights.

#2S – See Figure 13

#3S – See Figure 13

#4S

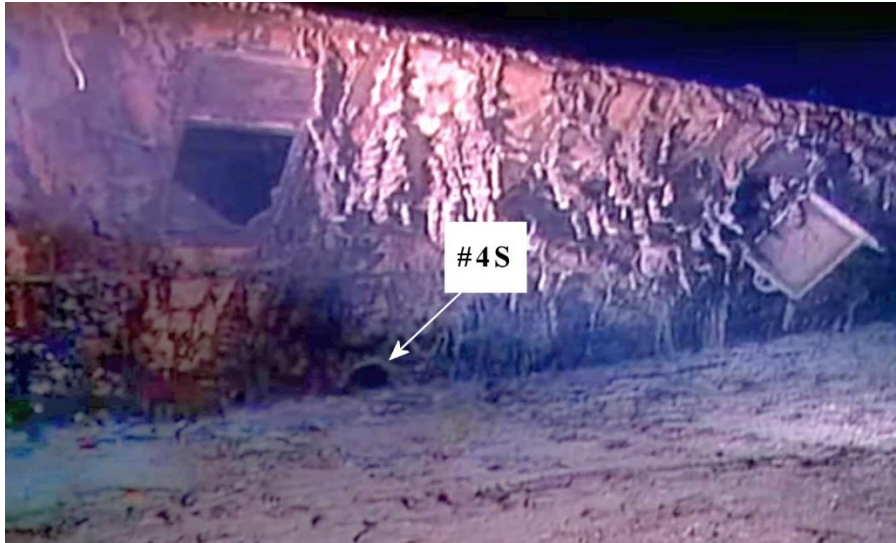


Figure 14

#4S

#5S – See Figure 13

#6S



Figure 15

#6S

#7S

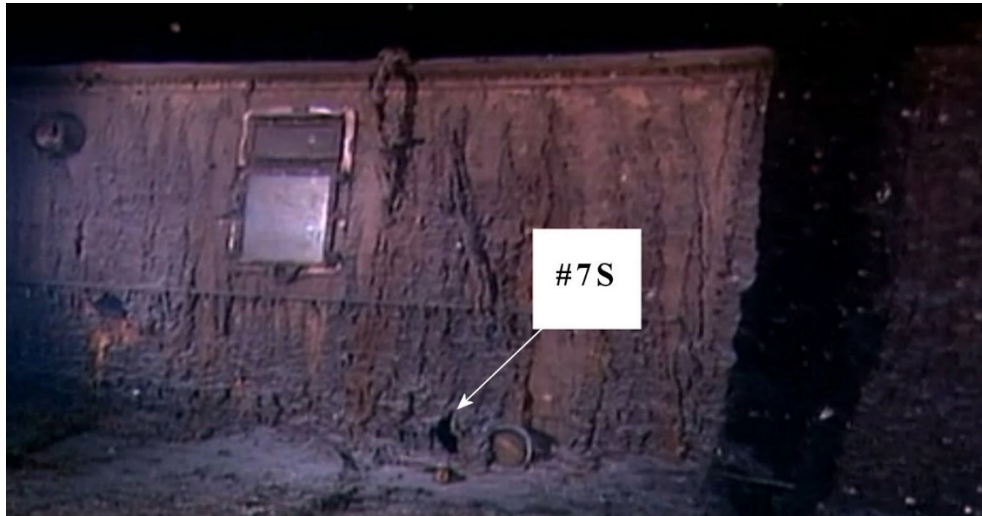


Figure 16

#7S

Conclusion

This article has served to document the recent revisions which have been made to the arrangement of the skid lights at the base of *Titanic's* port and starboard bulkheads. There has been at least one matter which has brought up the question of whether there is an additional skid light on the port side. If it were, it would represent a completely unique situation where one of the A deck interior staterooms would be served by two skid lights. This would be completely unprecedented. As such, it has not been discussed with the other revisions since the evidence is very thin. If and when a strong case can be made for it, this article will be revised but I would say that it unlikely that the revisions contained in this article will be amended any time soon.