

# The Case for Dog Kennels on *Titanic's* Boat Deck

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## Introduction

Over the years there has been considerable debate about the location of the dog kennels aboard *Titanic*. While there is no undisputable primary evidence for the location, this paper will make a circumstantial case that I believe is stronger than the alternatives.

## The Debate

The debate is fairly simple. On one side is the evidence presented for the location being on F deck near the third class galley. The location on this plan was as was shown on the plan used for the Limitation of Liability hearings after the disaster. The location of the kennels on F deck is shown in Figure 1.

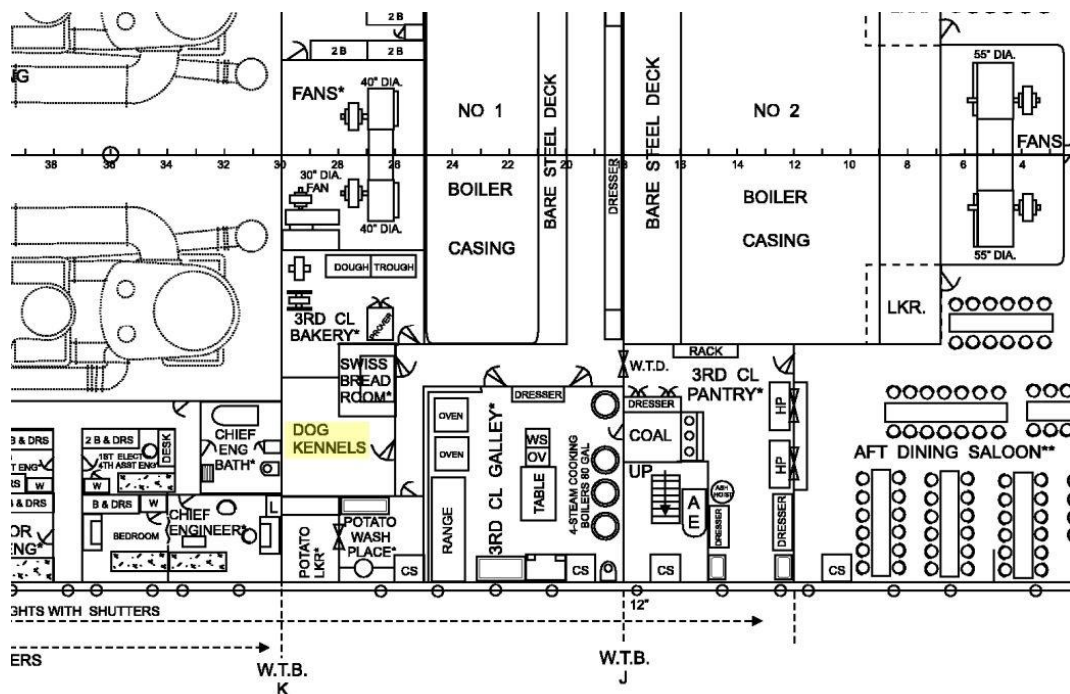


Figure 1

The evidence presented for this location is that it was indicated on plans used by the Limitation of Liability hearings and that it was closer to the butcher's shop whose responsibility it was to feed the dogs. The thing that makes this location curious is that the kennels would not be very near the butcher's shop. The butcher's shop was located on D deck port and the dog kennels on this plan are located on F deck starboard. So the proximity argument doesn't really hold up.

## The Boat Deck Location

The boat deck location of the kennels that will be proposed is shown as the second class cloak room on the aft port corner of the deck house under the fourth funnel. From the same Limitation of Liability plans the location of the supposed second class cloak room is shown in Figure 2.

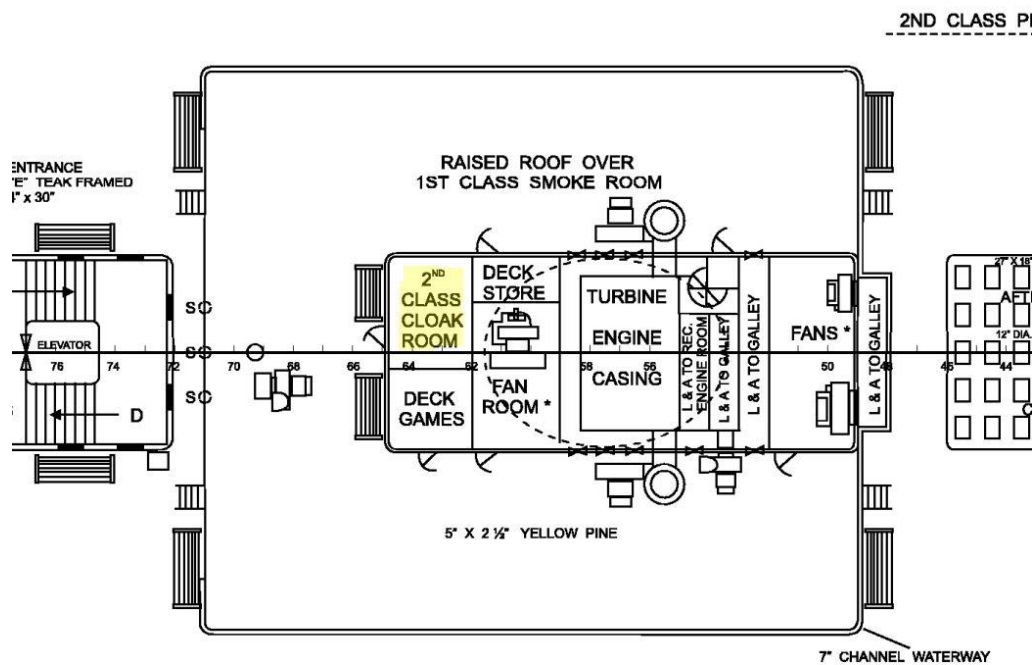


Figure 2

## The Case for the Boat Deck Location

The case for the boat deck location of *Titanic's* kennels will be made from photos of the area. The first thing that is at variance with the Limitation of Liability plans is the fact that the plans show a standard door to the cloak room while the photographs show a Dutch door. In Figure 3 we see a photo of the door to this room. Various items of door hardware are indicated and as compared to a standard door which is indicated in the photo on the port side of the deck house.

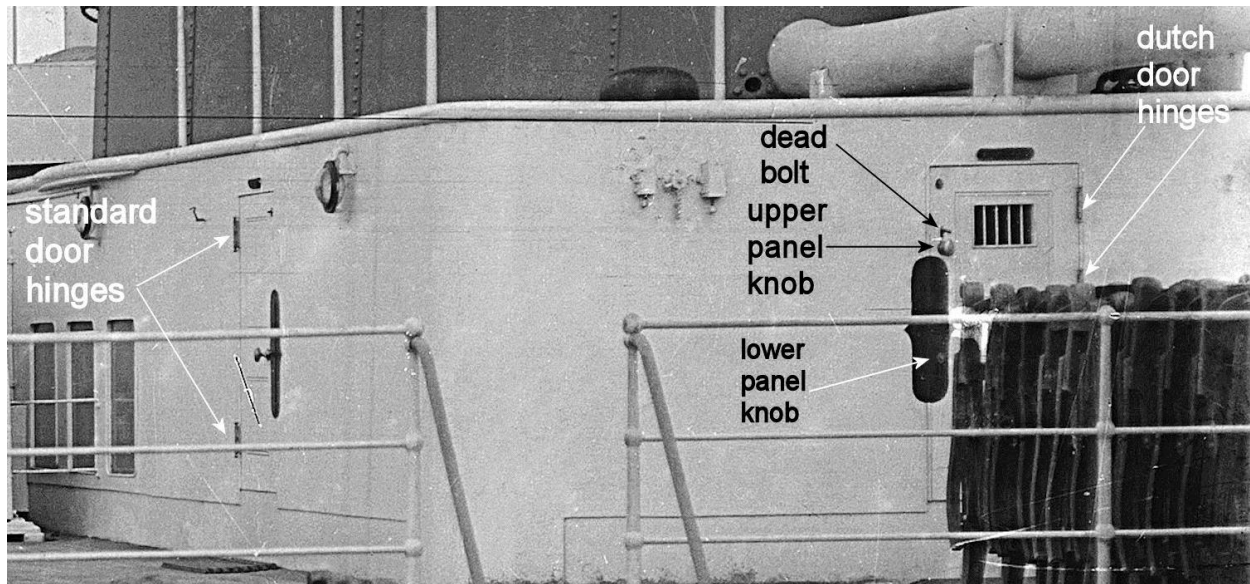


Figure 3

The presence of a Dutch door doesn't necessarily indicate that the door was for kennels rather than a cloak room. The Dutch door could have been used for an attendant to service passengers through. However there is one aspect of the door which I believe is the primary evidence for believing that this door opened to kennels. This aspect is the rectangular window in the upper door panel which had vertical bars in place. I believe that there was no glass in this opening. Bars of this nature were used in the well decks to protect porthole glass from damage by swinging cargo. There is no such danger in this area since we see other windows with no protection at all. A cloak room which is not in use with the door closed would have no need of any ventilation; however, kennels would. In the daytime, the upper panel of the door could be opened providing light and air. At night, the door could be closed with an opening for air being present.

### Olympic Evidence

In many aspects, *Titanic* was at the vanguard of changes which would later be made to her older sister *Olympic*. I believe this is the case with the kennels. In Figure 4 we see an *Olympic* plan from the 1920s showing the same location as is proposed for *Titanic* used for dog kennels.

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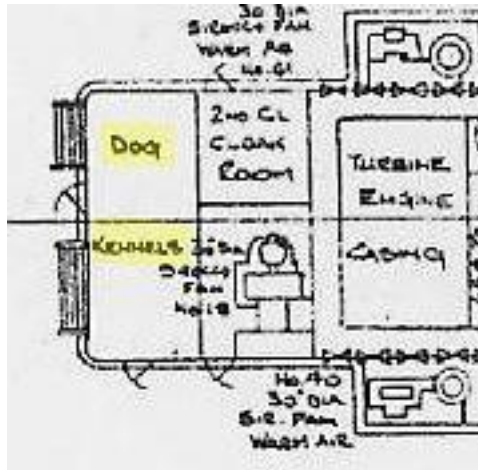


Figure 4

Further evidence of this being the location of *Olympic's* dog kennels is shown in Figure 5 where we see dogs outside the open door to the kennels.



Figure 5

*Olympic's* conversion of this room to dog kennels most likely happened during her 1913 refit. *Olympic's* configuration did have some differences. Instead of a Dutch door, *Olympic* had an outer standard wood door with a ventilation opening and an inner screen door. One aspect that is unknown is that *Olympic* used the entire aft section of the deck house for the kennels. Whether *Titanic* did is speculative. The starboard aft room is labeled "Deck Games" on the Limitation of Liability plans. However, if the second class cloak room was mislabeled then the deck games room also could have been.

## Passenger Reports

There are also passenger reports which seem to indicate that during the sinking someone may have released the dogs from their kennels. It is thought that it was most likely done at a boat deck location. This article will not discuss these reports because the actual evidence from photographs is persuasive enough on its own.

## Conclusion

Examination of high quality *Titanic* photographs has led me to the conclusion that the dog kennels were, in fact, most likely located on the boat deck of *Titanic*. Little beyond an annotated deck plan used at the Limitation of Liability hearings provides any support for the alternate location of the dog kennels on F deck. This article does not presume to offer indisputable proof but rather attempts to provide the best circumstantial evidence for the boat deck location of the dog kennels aboard *Titanic*.