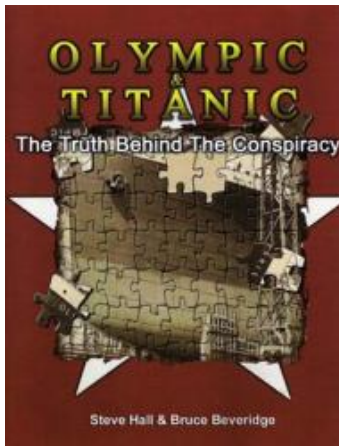


Switch theory founders in a sea of evidence

Reviewed by Monica Hall

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OLYMPIC & TITANIC - The Truth Behind The Conspiracy

by Steve Hall and Bruce Beveridge

The *Olympic-Titanic* Switch Theory, for the uninitiated, rests on a proposal by Robin Gardiner that the damage inflicted on the *Olympic* in 1911 after a collision with the elderly warship *Hawke*, armed with a quaint but effective underwater ram, prompted the WSL to attempt an insurance scam. The crooked-up *Olympic* would be disguised as her almost identical sister, the new *Titanic*, then sailed out into deep waters, safely abandoned on a pretext, and allowed to quietly sink. The real *Titanic* would become the *Olympic*, sail on happily ever after, and the WSL would claim on *Titanic's* insurance. Thus Gardiner's thesis is that the ship two and a half miles down in the Atlantic is not the newer *Titanic*, but actually the older and terminally un-seaworthy *Olympic*. This proposition might make even the most factually-challenged of *Titanic*

Luckily, however, for all those interested in fairness, two men have decided to put it to the ultimate test. And a rigorous test it is. The detailing of all the differences between the two ships, in order to lay to rest the theory that such a switch took place in the populous Harland and Wolff shipyard, in 1912.

The great thing about conspiracy theories is, of course, that they are such fun. One must suddenly feel so much more interesting, for example, as a self-proclaimed alien abductee. Anyone writing cold, dismal facts disproving these entertaining wish-fulfillments runs the risk of being cold-shouldered as a killjoy. This is something the authors are aware of, but on this forum at any rate, if not among general Amazon customers, that risk is minimal.

What can be asserted, without fear of contradiction, is that the technical detail of the *Olympic*

The book is stuffed with photographs and diagrams contrasting the two ships, which of course provides the really compelling evidence, and the appendices include a concise history of both the *Olympic* and *Britannic*.

One does have to ask whether the book was worth the obviously considerable effort, and whom they hoped to convince. The informed audience for such a book, however, is quite small and easily targeted through the *Titanic*

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Courtesy of Monica Hall

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