

Titanic Characters

For Chicago production of Vestergard/Loppenthin Opera

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Listed in Categories: Social Class

The Artists

The Upper Class

The Middle Class

The Lower Class

Other *Titanic* stories tend to offer four divisions: First Class passengers, Second Class passengers, Third Class passengers, and Crew.

National Identity Category

- British (9)
 - American (7)
 - Russian (2)
 - Italian (1)
 - French (1)
 - German (1)
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- T.S. Eliot is counted as British here, but he was born in the United States. So we might say 8.5 British and 7.5 American.

Artists (Mostly wealthy, privileged artists)

- Anna Akhmatova, Russian poet (1889-1966; age 22 in April 1912)
- Elmer Akhmatov, her brother (b. 1897; not a real person; age 15)
- Thomas [Stearns] Eliot (1888-1965; age 23)
- Virginia Woolf (1882-1941; age 29) [died by suicide; drowning]
- Leonard Woolf (1880-1969; age 31)
- Ghost of Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)
- Domenico Mustafa (1829-1912). Died March 17, 1912 (a few weeks before Titanic sailed).

The Upper Class

- President William [Howard] Taft (1857-1930; presidential term 1909-1913)
- First Lady Rebecca Taft (not her real name; Helen Louise “Nellie” Herron Taft: 1861-1943)
- Lady Mary Grantham (Downton Abbey reference?)
- Lady Katherine Grantham (reference to Lady Catherine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice*?)
- Richard Mayfield (Downton character is not named Mayfield)
- Sir Rupert Conrad (maybe refers to Joseph Conrad; one of his manuscripts was aboard the Titanic and was lost)

Middle Class

- Atticus Finch (fictional character from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Born 1880s or 1890s.)
- Louise Finch (Atticus's wife was named Jean Graham Finch; daughter Scout is named Louise)
- Nurse Renault (Maybe named for the car company? There is a lesbian author named Mary Renault: 1905-1983)
- Mr. Black
- Father Thompson

Lower Class (includes ship staff)

- Claire
- Peter
- Leo, Atticus's assistant and client

Anna Akhmatova Portraits (1914-1915)



Married Nikolay Gumilev in 1910; son Lev was born in September 1912.



T.S. Eliot (with wife Vivienne, 1916; and 1938 portrait)



Eliot may have married Vivienne as an excuse to remain in England to pursue poetry.

Vivienne had serious mental health issues. Eliot refused a divorce due to his religious sensibilities. She was eventually committed to an asylum against her will.



Downton Abbey Mary and Richard

Not 100% sure this is a one-to-one reference, but *Downton* is generally the right period, and the Titanic sinking is mentioned in the first season.



William Howard Taft



Political cartoons may be interesting to explore. This one is from 1912. Teddy Roosevelt had identified Taft as his successor in 1908, but then ran on a third-party ticket.

Helen Herron Taft, 1908 photo and 1910 official White House portrait

Helen Taft is known for planting cherry trees in Washington, DC and has a cherry tree variety named after her. (Pictured below)



Virginia and Leonard Woolf



Left and below: Two portraits by Vanessa Bell (both 1912)

