



Top 10 Facts about... The Crew of the SS Great Britain

1) There were lots of different jobs on the SS Great Britain, including roles linked to keeping the ship moving such as seamen, sailmakers and coal trimmers. There were also jobs looking after the passengers such as stewards, cooks, and the ship's surgeon.

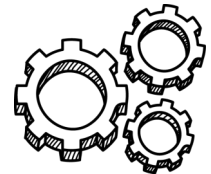
2) The crew worked in four-hour shifts, this meant working for four hours, then resting for four hours. This allowed most of the crew to share hammocks with each other so as one person started their shift, another could jump right into their nice warm hammock!



3) During the ship's working life, the crew came from at least 46 different countries, including places in Europe, Africa and the Americas.

4) The youngest members of crew were boys aged 11 years old. They were employed as assistant stewards or "Boys" who helped run messages and keep the ship tidy. The oldest known crew members were 60 years old.

5) There were more crew than passengers on the first voyage from Liverpool to New York, with 77 crew members to only 46 passengers!



Captain Grey © SS Great Britain

6) During its lifetime the ship had only six Captains. The longest serving, John Grey, disappeared from the ship mid-voyage in mysterious circumstances on 25 November 1872. To this day, no one knows exactly what happened to him.

7) Women were only employed as stewardesses and served the first-class female passengers who didn't bring a servant with them. On the first few voyages the stewardess got paid more than the male stewards!

8) Working on the SS Great Britain wasn't easy. Sailors would sometime get injured or even killed falling from the rigging.

9) The crew often had hobbies that they carried out onboard to pass the time when not working. Ship's surgeon Samuel Archer liked to collect shells from the places he visited around the world.

10) Crewman Felix Grenyer left a lasting mark on the SS Great Britain when he carved his name in the crew quarters. That piece of graffiti is now on display in the Dockyard Museum at the SS Great Britain!

