



The Lusitania Saga & Myth: 100 Years On

David Ramsay

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The SS Lusitania entered service with Cunard in 1907. The first transatlantic express liner powered by marine turbines, she could complete the Liverpool-New York crossing in five days and had a top speed of 25 knots. She restored the British supremacy of the key North Atlantic route which the Germans had seized.

All this ended on 7 May 1915 when she was torpedoed by a German U-boat and sank 18 minutes later with the loss of 1,198 passengers and crew (interestingly 39% of those aboard survived whereas only 32% of those on the Titanic survived despite the latter taking 2 hours, 40 minutes to sink.)

The Author concentrates not just on the disaster but its aftermath including the political recriminations and the inquiry. As a result of the loss of 128 American citizens the Germans signed an agreement not to attack US shipping. Their breach of this was a major contributory reason, along with the Zimmermann Telegram, why the USA entered the War.

This is a fascinating study of a major shipping disaster with profound consequences



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