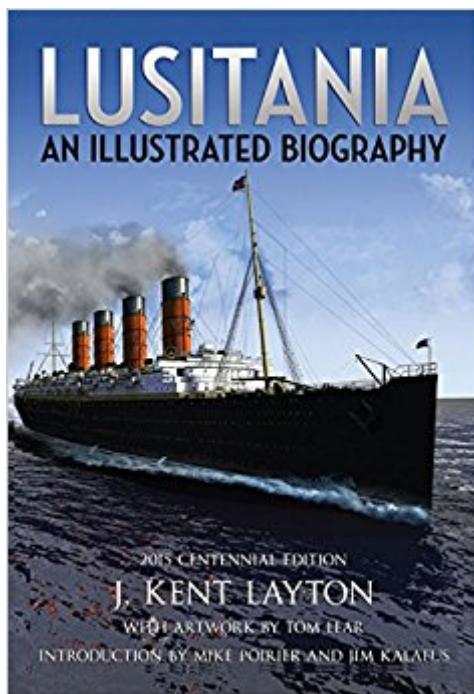


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# Lusitania: An Illustrated Biography



## Synopsis

2015 marks the centennial anniversary of one of the worst maritime disasters in the history of the great trans-Atlantic liners: the sinking of the RMS Lusitania. This volume helps to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the disaster by telling the complete story of the life and loss of the Lusitania. Today, the Lusitania is mostly remembered for her tragic sinking, the political repercussions of the disaster, and on numerous conspiracies which have sprung up around her. While it is important to remember her tragic loss and the people whose lives were forever changed by that event, it is also important to remember the history of the great liner in context. Prior to May 7, 1915, the Lusitania was already a legend: not for tragedy, but instead for success. Having entered service in September 1907, for seven and a half years, she crossed the North Atlantic with punctuality and dependability. She fast became the ship of choice for many of the transatlantic travellers. Since her sinking, however, the story of her wondrous career and technological marvels have largely been neglected. Instead, the focus has shifted to her political importance, and on numerous conspiracy theories about her last voyage and sinking. This special centennial edition of *Lusitania: An Illustrated Biography* discusses the entire story of the liner. There have been numerous updates, expansions and corrections to the 2010 text; new photographic and illustrative material has been added, many of them in large format to help bring her back to life for readers. Artist Stuart Williamson has generously added some of his pieces to the color section to help supplement the fine work of Tom Lear, which was produced specifically for the 2010 edition. In short, everything that was so highly regarded about the previous edition has been retained, while the improvements and additions bring the book to new heights. It is hoped that this new volume will be a fitting tribute to all of those who sailed aboard, died on, and who were ever touched by the legendary Lusitania. This special edition is not to be missed, and belongs on the shelves of anyone who loves the history of the great Atlantic liners.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 440 pages

Publisher: Amberley; 2 edition (March 23, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 144564262X

ISBN-13: 978-1445642628

Product Dimensions: 6.8 x 1.6 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3 pounds ([View shipping rates and policies](#))

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (16 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

The new J. Kent Layton book on the LUSITANIA, certainly has to me among the most concise, detailed books ever regarding this one famous Cunard liner... Although her sister-ship MAURETANIA gained more fame over the long term for her enduring speed record and flawless reliability, the LUSITANIA remains most familiar to many, largely due to the pointless war-induced disaster which befell her... There are many photographs never seen anywhere else, plus some survivor accounts and anecdotes from others still alive from when the ship met her doom... The book has a set of deck-plans, plus a number of colorized period postcard photos of the liner "as built" with the white forecastle before she actually entered commercial service. The book also contains several colorized interior photos from her early years. There are also a number of finely-detailed paintings of the LUSITANIA, including the cover artwork depicting the liner as she looked with buff promenade-stripe and black funnels as per her last voyage. Pete Hodges

I hadn't remembered seeing this book before, though I may have and had simply ignored it. I'm so glad I saw this and decided to get it. It had been out for two years, so why hadn't I seen this already? It's published and printed in Britain, and I couldn't be happier. What a gem. There are several photos of Lusitania, as well as a few of her sister Mauretania, at various stages of construction and during her life. Included are a few great candid shots of passengers that will tweak any ocean liner fanatic's fancy. The written history is rich and of great depth. The typeface is very readable at about 12 to 13 point, which is great on any aging eyes. Also included are many colour illustrations and what appear to be colourised photos. The deck plans also depicted aren't fold outs, but indeed serve to make this book more complete. There are even extensive passenger lists from a few voyages included at the end. This book will round out my collection of books, and will help as I'm building the model of the ship I have yet to begin.

I have read most of the books that have been written on this subject, starting with A.A. and Mary Hoehling's THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE LUSITANIA (1956), and I must say, this is the most

complete history of this fascinating ship that I have ever seen. Every detail is there, from the laying of the keel, through the peacetime voyages that gained her great fame and the Blue Riband for speed...few writers want to venture into the history, all they want to portray is the drama and the gore of the devastatingly premature end of her career at the hands of a bloodthirsty U-boat commander. We don't need here to debate whether she was a legitimate target or not because she carried contraband weapons into a war zone, or whether the British Admiralty knowingly used her civilian passengers as a human shield to deliver the goods or, even more gleefully neutral about it, might pull the USA into the conflict if she happened to be sunk by the Germans....all of that has been covered elsewhere ad infinitum. This book shows the history of a Grand Dame of the Seas, and like Miss Havisham in *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*, we all wince when she unexpectedly falls victim to a falling log that rolls out of the fireplace. In the midst of these pages, you will see a myriad of photos that you have never seen before of a great ship carrying the illustrious and privileged of the time safely and quickly across the pond. The photos display a society page of the times. No wonder there were several well-known characters amidst the victims of the last voyage...they had all learned from their peers that this was the ship to travel aboard! Buy this book and experience more than one Bon Voyage!Peter Stelling, Atlanta, Georgia

This is a giant of a book in every way. It's packed with high quality photos, many published for the first time, and the scope of the narrative tells the whole story of the Lusitania. It's a truly astonishing slice of social history, with many first hand accounts giving the text a lively and real feel. Many will have heard of the Lusitania, but the story of a later ship, *Titanic*, is the one which has captured imagination. In a way, the Lusitania story is the more compelling. She had a sailing career of some 7 years, travelling back and forth across the Atlantic, taking many to a new life in the New World. And the circumstances of her loss, torpedoed by the Germans despite being a civilian ship, remains controversial. Built at the John Brown shipyard, this was a truly sumptuous Cunard liner. The photos and descriptions of the interior design and decor bring a different age of social custom and travel vividly to life. In addition to a range of sumptuous lounges, there were writing and music rooms, a huge fireplace and Corinthian columns over 9.5 feet. With extensive walnut panelling, parquet floors and miles of Brussels carpet, it's difficult to believe that these areas are all located within the confines of a hull. The opulent areas were for the exclusive benefit of some 500 First Class passengers. The 1100 Third Class and 400 or so Second Class had to manage with significantly less. The research is impeccable. There's sufficient technical detail to satisfy anyone with an interest in the history of a ship's method of construction. But at the same time, the narrative is totally

accessible to the lay reader. It's filled with human interest making it a compelling read. J Kent Layton has done his subject proud in a remarkable record of an iconic flagship. I enjoyed it immensely and will look for other books in his series about liners from the last century. My thanks to the publisher for a review copy via Netgalley

This book is one of the most comprehensive books about the Lusitania. I have been an avid Lusitania buff for over thirty years and I have purchased books about her, but this book has pictures of Lusitania that have never been seen at Liverpool and here in New York. I am extremely satisfied with this book and would like to salute the creator of the book, J Kent Layton, "Cheers", A magnificent Job Well Done.

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