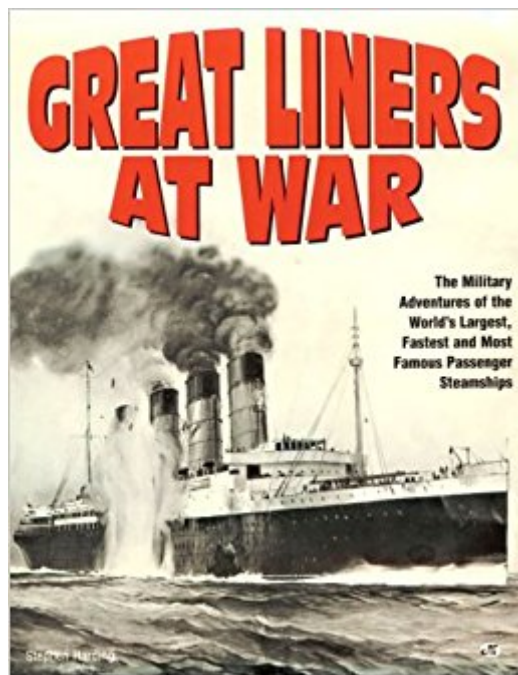




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Great Liners At War: Military Adventures Of The World's Largest And Most Famous Passenger Ships



Synopsis

During the past century, some of the most magnificent passenger ships ever built were commandeered by the military and converted to floating hospitals, armed merchant cruisers, dummy battleships, or troop transports. Several of the world's largest shipwrecks occurred when liners were sunk in wartime, from the Titanic's sister ship Britannic; sunk in 1916 when she hit a mine; to Canadian Pacific's Empress of Britain, which was attacked and sunk by a U-boat in 1940. Passenger ships played a huge role in World War II in particular; it is estimated that the huge troop-carrying capacity of the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth shortened the war by at least a year. This is a captivating look at the civilian-made liners that served in conflicts ranging from World War I up through more recent conflicts such as the Falkland Islands and the enormous contributions they have made to the armed services. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Stephen Harding is a journalist and a maritime history expert. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

This well written, and well illustrated book is one of the few to cover the wartime efforts of passenger liners during the 19th and 20th centuries. Back in a time when troops, just like everyone else in the world, had to travel between the continents by sea; passenger ships were the obvious choice for

moving them in big numbers quickly and efficiently. Some of the greatest liners of all time served as troopships or hospital ships in wartime. Nine of history's very best, are covered in this book. Using some fantastic photographs, many never seen before, author Steve Harding tells about the cramped conditions on troopships during World Wars I and II. Incidentally, only one of those covered, the four stacker Aquitania, performed this kind of service in both World Wars, and she survived both conflicts. According to the author, this is a unique honor for this remarkable and lucky ship. The work performed by these vessels was vital to the war effort, but because they were not designed for this kind of duty, their safety was paramount. Therefore, their movements throughout the world were kept pretty much a secret during both wars. Because of this, we have very little written information on them for research purposes. Steve Harding has done the only kind of research that can be done in this case, he interviewed those who sailed on, or served aboard the vessels at the time. By doing so, he has dug up the kind of detailed information that makes the story of each ship so interesting. He covers the dangers of the great influenza epidemic which, in some cases, condemned hundreds of soldiers packed on the ships during WWI; as well as the threats of submarines and aircraft that took such a deadly toll on the troop carriers during WW2. Perhaps the most remarkable statistic of all is that no fully loaded troopship of major size was sunk during either war. The loss of life that would have resulted from the sinking of a liner with a troop capacity of the afore mentioned Aquitania for example, would have been the worst sea disaster ever. If your interested in passenger liners, and their life stories, this book is certainly your best choice to cover the ships during wartime. The photographs are all rare and very well chosen for each of the nine major liners covered. A separate chapter covers the Lusitania, and her tragic loss during the First World War. An excellent book on all counts.

This book was truly great. The value is in the pictures, many rare which are being published for the first time. You see great ships like the Mauretania and Aquitania in dazzle paint, or the Queen Mary after the Curacao incident. The facts are a little off in some parts, but overall is excellent,

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