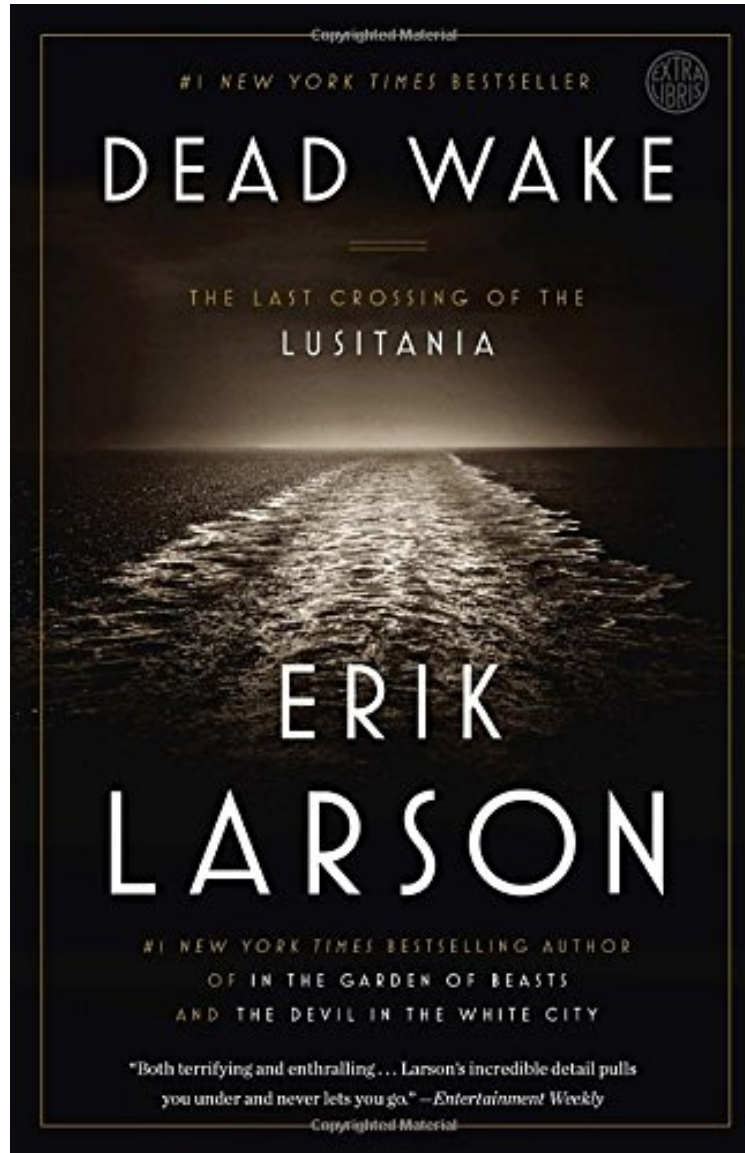


(Mobile book) Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania

Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania

Erik Larson

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Erik Larson : Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania:

464 of 485 people found the following review helpful. The Mystery of Room 40 and the Sinking of Humanity By IsolaBlue Erik Larson is not capable of writing anything less than a gripping account of history. All of his previous books have been spellbinding accounts of storms, cities, crimes, inventions, ships and/or war. In DEAD WAKE: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania, Larson returns to the subjects of war and ships and stirs in a potent mixture of

international politics as well as a little romance to once again seduce his readers with a contemporary view of an historical situation. Written to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the Lusitania, a Cunard passenger liner sunk by a German U-Boat, Larson's account differs in several ways from other well-known books produced on the subject. Diana Preston's *LUSITANIA: An Epic Tragedy*, published in 2002, is one of the best-written accounts of the disaster. The difference between Preston's work and Larson's might be found in the subtitle of the Larson book which emphasizes the crossing while Preston's book is most memorable for its account of the sinking and its aftermath, particularly accounts of survival. No one can read Preston's book without feeling as if he/she is clinging to a piece of wreckage in a cold, spring sea awaiting rescue. No one can read Larson's book and not feel like the proverbial fly on the wall in the infamous Room 40 of the British Admiralty. While Preston addressed Room 40, in Larson's writing, the room takes on a role and becomes a character (albeit not a very appealing one) in its own right. Larson skillfully gets into the mindset of Winston Churchill and how determined he was to see America enter the war. In the States, Larson goes back in time and brings President Woodrow Wilson to life through a love affair that seemed to take up more of his time than thinking about the suitability of America's neutrality. Yet Larson allows readers to see Wilson in a most human light; perhaps the love affair gave him the strength for the decisions he had to make later. While the reader feels a connection with Wilson and also with the much-maligned but ultimately blameless Captain of the Lusitania, Captain Turner, utter horror and strong dislike is brought out when we read about Captain Schwieger of U-Boat 20 and, in a strange way, perhaps even more when we examine the real-life characters and goings-on within the Admiralty's Room 40. Germany and Britain both emerge as more than a bit despicable. The pluses of Larson's latest work are his acute examination of Room 40, his up-close look at Woodrow Wilson, and his ability to swing between the behind-the-scenes action and balance his discoveries with a conventional but absorbing look at some of the passengers on board the Lusitania all while building a true and terrifying suspense in the narrative. His profile of Charles Lauriat, Boston bookseller and collector of rare documents and drawings, is excellent. One senses that Larson was truly interested in Lauriat and might, having not been faced with producing a book to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Lusitania's sinking, have chosen Lauriat as a sole subject for a book or article. Erik Larson can never disappoint. Whether one reads a great deal about WWI history, maritime disasters, or early 1900s international politics, there is something new to be learned in *DEAD WAKE*. For those who have read very little about the Lusitania, this book is an excellent starting point. As mentioned before, Diana Preston's *LUSITANIA: An Epic Tragedy* tells a similar story but with a slightly different approach. Both books have something to offer, but Larson's, being newer, may include some fresh revelations about the history we thought we knew.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Two Years of Research Was Well Worth the Effort
By Bill Emblom
Author Erik Larson spent two years researching information on the sinking of the Lusitania and it shows in this very detailed telling of this period in American history. President Woodrow was fighting depression due to the death of his wife and now has found a new love to revive his spirits. Author Lawson introduces the reader to several passengers who will make this fateful trip from New York to Liverpool, England, and I must admit, that this became somewhat tedious reading at times. Nevertheless, I count this as my problem and not the author's. I appreciate having a map of the Ireland, England, and Wales, area inside the front and back cover with key cities and water bodies labeled so I can see where the attack on the Lusitania took place. Author Larson introduces Walther Schwieger the German submarine commander and a combination of a series of events takes place that make it possible for an attack on the Lusitania. Great detail is provided regarding passengers while trying to survive while in the water waiting rescue. This information, like all of the book is based on information Larson found in his research. Questions regarding where to assign blame and why wasn't the ship escorted in these dangerous waters is also dealt with. If you enjoy American history this book should be a part of your library.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well written and very informative
By Ambrose Rankin
Dead Wake is a very well written story of the Lusitania's last voyage. Larson provides a good overview of the events, essentially weaving together four stories - three of which were fascinating. Most of the book tells the stories of a select group of crew and passengers who sailed on that voyage (selected based on people for whom information was available - I assume). This was interesting though it dragged on a bit (onboard activities were somewhat predictable if you've seen "Titanic" - drinking and dining, some gambling and, ooh, look at the stark class distinctions). He also describes the voyage and crew of the u-boat that ultimately sinks the Lusitania. I found this more interesting and the best part of the book for me - maybe because it was an area I knew less about. Larson gives a great description of the engineering of the u-boats. State of the art at the time, but we would view them as quite primitive. Third, the actions of British Intelligence (including a younger Churchill) is also very interesting - did they allow Lusitania to sail into harm's way to encourage the US to enter the war? Finally, he includes a lot about the concurrent activity of President Wilson who was courting his second wife during the same week that the Lusitania was sunk. I found this somewhat off topic and distracting. All in all, I would recommend this for anyone interested in learning about a very fateful event.

#1 New York Times Bestseller
From the bestselling author and master of narrative nonfiction comes the enthralling story of the sinking of the Lusitania. On May 1, 1915, with WWI entering its tenth month, a luxury ocean liner as richly appointed as an English country house sailed out of New York, bound for Liverpool, carrying a record number of

children and infants. The passengers were surprisingly at ease, even though Germany had declared the seas around Britain to be a war zone. For months, German U-boats had brought terror to the North Atlantic. But the Lusitania was one of the era's great transatlantic Greyhound—the fastest liner then in service—and her captain, William Thomas Turner, placed tremendous faith in the gentlemanly strictures of warfare that for a century had kept civilian ships safe from attack. Germany, however, was determined to change the rules of the game, and Walther Schwieger, the captain of Unterseeboot-20, was happy to oblige. Meanwhile, an ultra-secret British intelligence unit tracked Schwieger's U-boat, but told no one. As U-20 and the Lusitania made their way toward Liverpool, an array of forces both grand and achingly small—hubris, a chance fog, a closely guarded secret, and more—all converged to produce one of the great disasters of history. It is a story that many of us think we know but don't, and Erik Larson tells it thrillingly, switching between hunter and hunted while painting a larger portrait of America at the height of the Progressive Era. Full of glamour and suspense, *Dead Wake* brings to life a cast of evocative characters, from famed Boston bookseller Charles Lauriat to pioneering female architect Theodate Pope to President Woodrow Wilson, a man lost to grief, dreading the widening war but also captivated by the prospect of new love. Gripping and important, *Dead Wake* captures the sheer drama and emotional power of a disaster whose intimate details and true meaning have long been obscured by history.

.com An Best Book of the Month for March 2015: On May 1st, 1915 the Lusitania set sail on its final voyage. That it was sunk by a German U-boat will be news to few and Larson's challenge is to craft a historical narrative leading up to the thrilling, if known, conclusion, building anticipation in his readers along the way. To his credit, he makes the task look easy. Focusing on the politics of WWI, on nautical craftsmanship and strategy, and on key players in the eventual attack and sinking of the fast, comfortable, and beloved Lusitania, Larson once again illustrates his gift for seducing us with history and giving it a human face. *Dead Wake* puts readers right aboard the famous Cunard liner and keeps them turning the pages until the book's final, breathless encounter. Chris Schlupe Finalist for the Washington State Book Award History/General Non-fiction A Washington Post Notable Nonfiction Book of 2015 A St. Louis Post-Dispatch Best Book of 2015 A Miami Herald Favorite Book of 2015 BookTrib's Best Narrative Nonfiction Book of 2015 #1 History Biography Book in the 2015 Goodreads Choice Awards A LibraryReads Top Ten Book of 2015 A Library Journal Top Ten Book of 2015 A Kirkus Best Book of 2015 An Indigo Best Book of 2015 "Larson is one of the modern masters of popular narrative nonfiction... a resourceful reporter and a subtle stylist who understands the tricky art of Edward Scissorhands-ing narrative strands into a pleasing story... An entertaining book about a great subject, and it will do much to make this seismic event resonate for new generations of readers." The New York Times Book "Larson is an old hand at treating nonfiction like high drama... He knows how to pick details that have maximum soapy potential and then churn them down until they foam [and] has an eye for haunting, unexploited detail." The New York Times "In his gripping new examination of the last days of what was then the fastest cruise ship in the world, Larson brings the past stingingly alive... He draws upon telegrams, war logs, love letters, and survivor depositions to provide the intriguing details, things I didn't know I wanted to know... Thrilling, dramatic and powerful." NPR "Larson is a journalist who writes non-fiction books that read like novels, real page-turners. This one is no exception. I had known a lot about the Titanic but little about the Lusitania. This filled in those gaps... this one is pretty damned good. Thoroughly engrossing." George R.R. Martin "This enthralling and richly detailed account demonstrates that there was far more going on beneath the surface than is generally known... Larson's account [of the Lusitania's sinking] is the most lucid and suspenseful yet written, and he finds genuine emotional power in the unlucky confluences of forces, 'large and achingly small,' that set the stage for the ship's agonizing final moments." The Washington Post "Utterly engrossing... Expertly ratcheting up the tension... Larson puts us on board with these people; it's page-turning history, breathing with life." The Seattle Times "Larson has a gift for transforming historical re-creations into popular recreations, and *Dead Wake* is no exception... [He] provides first-rate suspense, a remarkable achievement given that we already know how this is going to turn out... The tension, in the reader's easy chair, is unbearable..." The Boston Globe "Both terrifying and enthralling. As the two vessels stumble upon each other, the story almost takes on the narrative pulse of *Jaws*—the sinking was impossible and inevitable at the same time. At no point do you root for the shark, but Larson's incredible detail pulls you under and never lets you go." Entertainment Weekly "Erik Larson [has] made a career out of turning history into best sellers that read as urgently as thrillers... A meticulous master of non-fiction suspense." USA Today "[Larson] vividly captures the disaster and the ship's microcosm, in which the second class seems more appealing than the first." The New Yorker "[Larson is] a superb storyteller and a relentless research hound..." Lev Grossman, TIME "[Larson] proves his mettle again as a weaver of tales of navet, calumny and intrigue. He engagingly sketches life aboard the liner and amply describes the powers political situations The panorama Mr. Larson surveys is impressive, as is the breadth of his research and the length of his bibliography. He can't miss engaging readers with the curious cast of characters, this ship of fools, and his accounting of the sinking itself and the survivors' ordeals are the stuff of nightmares." Washington Times "Readers looking for a swift, emotionally engaging account of one of history's great sea disasters will find *Dead Wake* grimly exhilarating. Larson is an exceptionally skilled storyteller, and his tick-tock narrative, which cuts between the Lusitania, U-20 and the political powers behind them, is pitch-perfect." The Richmond Times-Dispatch "Larson so brilliantly elucidates [the Lusitania's fate] in *Dead Wake*, his

detailed forensic and utterly engrossing account of the Lusitania's last voyage...Yes, we know how the story of the Lusitania ends, but there's still plenty of white-knuckle tension. In *Dead Wake*, he delivers such a marvelously thorough investigation of the ship's last week that it practically begs Hollywood blockbuster treatment."The Toronto Globe Mail"Larson's nimble, exquisitely researched tale puts you dead center...Larson deftly pulls off the near-magical feat of taking a foregone conclusion and conjuring a tale that's suspenseful, moving and altogether riveting."Dallas Morning News"With each revelation from Britain and America, with each tense, claustrophobic scene aboard U-20, the German sub that torpedoed the ship, with each vignette from the Lusitania, Larson's well-paced narrative ratchets the suspense. His eye for the ironic detail keen, his sense of this time period perceptive, Larson spins a sweeping tale that gives the Lusitanians due attention. His book may well send Leonardo DiCaprio chasing its film rights."San Francisco Chronicle"An expertly crafted tale of individual and corporate hubris, governmental intrigue and cover-up, highlighting a stunning series of coincidences and miscalculations that ultimately placed the Lusitania in the direct path of the catastrophic strike...[Larson's] pacing is impeccable."The Miami Herald"[Larson] has a gift for finding the small, personal details that bring history to life...His depiction of the sinking of the ship, and the horrific 18 minutes between the time it was hit and the time it disappeared, is masterly, moving between strange, touching details."Columbus Dispatch"In the hands of a lesser craftsman, the fascinating story of the last crossing of the Lusitania might risk being bogged down by dull character portraits, painstaking technical analyses of submarine tactics or the minutiae of WWI-era global politics. Not so with Erik Larson...Larson wrestles these disparate narratives into a unified, coherent story and so creates a riveting account of the Lusitania's ending and the beginnings of the U.S.'s involvement in the war."Pittsburgh Post Gazette"In your mind, the sinking of the luxury liner Lusitania may be filed in a cubbyhole...After reading Erik Larson's impressive reconstruction of the Lusitania's demise, you're going to need a much bigger cubbyhole...Larson's book is a work of carefully sourced nonfiction, not a novelization, but it has a narrative sweep and miniseries pacing that make it highly entertaining as well as informative."Milwaukee Journal Sentinel"Larson breathes life into narrative history like few writers working today."Minneapolis Star Tribune"Now the tragic footnote to a global conflagration, the history of the [Lusitania's] final voyage... is worthy of the pathos and narrative artistry Erik Larson brings to *Dead Wake*...Reader's of Larson's previous nonfiction page turners...will not be disappointed. He's an excellent scene setter and diligent researcher who tells the story with finesse and suspense."Newsday"The story of the Lusitania's sinking by a German U-boat has been told before, but Larson's version features new details and the gripping immediacy he's famous for."People"We can't wait for the James Cameron version of Erik Larson's *Dead Wake*."New York Magazine"Larson...long ago mastered the art of finding overlooked and faded curiosities and converting them into page-turning popular histories. Here, again, he manages the same trick."Christian Science Monitor"Fans of Erik Larson's narrative nonfiction have trusted that whatever tale he chooses to tell, they'll find it compelling. *Dead Wake* proves them right...History at its harrowing best."New York Daily News"A quickly paced, imminently readable exploration of an old story you may only half-know."Arkansas Democratic Gazette"We all know how the story ends, but Larson still makes you want to turn the pages, and turn them quickly. What makes the story, is that Larson takes a few main characters--the Lusitania's Captain William Thomas Turner, President Woodrow Wilson, U-boat Captain Walther Schweiger, Boston bookseller Charles Lauriat, architect Theodore Pope, and a few minor ones--and weaves them together towards the inevitable and tragic conclusion. Larson has done his research. The number of details and anecdotes that he has managed to cobble together are fascinating in themselves."Foreign Policy"Larson turns this familiar tale into a finely written elegy on the contingency of war."Maclean's Magazine"Larson is a master storyteller and quickens the pace as target and attackers hurtle toward their inevitable, deadly rendezvous. The suspense builds because readers care about his fully-formed characters, and it's not always clear who will live and who will die.Salon"Because Larson has such a sense of story, when he gets to the tragedy itself, the book hums along in vivid form. You feel, viscerally, what it's like to be on a sinking ship, and the weight of life lost that day. The fact that this is coming through a page-turner history book, where all the figures and details reveal an impeccable eye and thorough research, is just one of the odd pleasures of Larson's writing."Flavorwire[Larson] thrillingly chronicles the liners last voyage... He draws upon a wealth of sources for his subject telegrams, wireless messages, survivor depositions, secret intelligence ledgers, a submarine captain's war log, love letters, admiralty and university archives, even morgue photos of Lusitania victims Filled with revealing political, military and social information, Larson's engrossing *Dead Wake* is, at its heart, a benediction for the 1,198 souls lost at sea.Tampa Bay Times"Larson, an authority on nonfiction accounts, expounds on our primary education, putting faces to the disaster and crafting an intimate portrait in *Dead Wake*. A lover of history will get so close to the story...that it is hard not to feel as if you are on board with new friends..."Fort Worth Star-Telegram"In a well-paced narrative, Larson reveals the forces large and small, natural and man-made, coincidental and intentional, that propelled the Lusitania to its fatal rendezvous...Larson's description of the moments and hours that followed the torpedo's explosive impact is riveting...*Dead Wake* stands on its own as a gripping recounting of an episode that still has the power to haunt a reader 100 years later."Buffalo News"Larson, who was once described as "an historian with a novelist's soul," has written a book which combines the absorbing tenor of fiction with the realities of history."The Toronto Sun"[Larson] shows that narrative history can let us have it both ways: great drama wedded to rigorous knowledge. The German torpedoing of

the great ship 100 years ago was almost as deadly as the Titanic sinking, and far more world-changing. Larson makes it feel as immediate and contingent as the present day. "NY Mag's Vulture.com" The bestselling author of *The Devil in the White City* and *Thunderstruck* puts his mastery of penning parallel narratives on display as he tells the tale of the sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German submarine, building an ever-growing sense of dread as the two vessels draw closer to their lethal meeting...He goes well beyond what's taught in history classes to offer insights into British intelligence and the dealings that kept the ship from having the military escort so many passengers expected to protect it...By piecing together how politics, economics, technology, and even the weather combined to produce an event that seemed both unlikely and inevitable, he offers a fresh look at a world-shaking disaster. "The Onion A/V Club" An intriguing, entirely engrossing investigation into a legendary disaster. "Kirkus s, starred review" Factual and personal to a high degree, the narrative reads like a grade-A thriller. "Booklist, starred review" [Larson] has always shown a brilliant ability to unearth the telling details of a story and has the narrative chops to bring a historical moment vividly alive. But in his new book, Larson simply outdoes himself...What is most compelling about *Dead Wake* is that, through astonishing research, Larson gives us a strong sense of the individuals—passengers and crew—aboard the *Lusitania*, heightening our sense of anxiety as we realize that some of the people we have come to know will go down with the ship. A story full of ironies and 'what-ifs,' *Dead Wake* is a tour de force of narrative history. "BookPage, Top Pick" With a narrative as smooth as the titular passenger liner, Larson delivers a riveting account of one of the most tragic events of WWI...A blunt reminder that war is, at its most basic, a matter of life and death. "Publishers Weekly" Once again, Larson transforms a complex event into a thrilling human interest story. This suspenseful account will entice readers of military and maritime history along with lovers of popular history. "Library Journal" Critically acclaimed 'master of narrative nonfiction' Erik Larson has produced a thrilling account of the principals and the times surrounding this tumultuous event in world history...After an intimate look at the passengers, and soon-to-be victims, who board in New York despite the warning of 'unrestricted warfare' from the German embassy, Larson turns up the pace with shorter and shorter chapters alternating between the hunted and the hunter until the actual shot. All in all a significant story. Well told. "Florida Times-Union" ...the tension mounts page by page and the reading of *Dead Wake* becomes a very cinematic experience. "Summit Daily" From the Hardcover edition. About the Author Erik Larson is the author of five national bestsellers, including *The Devil in the White City* and *In the Garden of Beasts*, which have collectively sold more than 6.5 million copies. His books have been published in seventeen countries. From the Hardcover edition.