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Estimated read time: 4 min read "Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania" by Erik Larson recounts the tragic sinking of the Lusitania during World War I, blending historical detail with personal stories to illuminate the impact of the Lusitania during World War I, blending historical detail with personal stories to illuminate the impact of the Lusitania during World War I, blending historical detail with personal stories to illuminate the impact of the Lusitania during World War I.
the sinking of the RMS Lusitania during World War I. Published in 2015, the book provides a meticulous account of this maritime disaster, blending historical facts with compelling storytelling. Larson, known for his ability to weave history with narrative, brings to life the events leading up to the tragedy and its aftermath. Brief Synopsis Plot
Overview"Dead Wake" delves into the final voyage of the Lusitania, a British ocean liner torpedoed by a German U-boat in 1915. Through the perspectives of passengers, crew, and military personnel, Larson reconstructs the events leading to the ship's demise. The narrative intertwines personal stories with broader geopolitical tensions, illustrating
the complex interplay of human error, fate, and war. SettingThe story unfolds in the early 20th century, primarily focusing on the Atlantic Ocean crossing from New York to Liverpool. The narrative captures the tense atmosphere of World War I, highlighting the Lusitania's journey amidst the backdrop of submarine warfare. Main Characters Captain
William Thomas Turner: The experienced captain of the Lusitania, navigating the threat of German U-boats. Walter Schwieger: The commander of the United States, whose decisions are influenced by the sinking. Various Passengers: Including wealthy
socialites, families, and everyday travelers, each with unique stories and perspectives. Departure and Preparation The Lusitania departs from New York on May 1, 1915, amidst growing concerns about German submarine threats. Captain Turner is aware of the risks but confident in the ship's speed and reputation. Passengers, unaware of the
impending danger, embark on what they expect to be a routine transatlantic crossing. The German ThreatAs the Lusitania sails, U-boat U-20, commanded by Walter Schwieger's mission is to disrupt Allied shipping, and the Lusitania becomes a prime target. Despite prior warnings, the British
Admiralty provides limited guidance to Turner, contributing to the ship's vulnerability. The SinkingOn May 7, 1915, the Lusitania is struck by a torpedo off the coast of Ireland. The ship sinks in just 18 minutes, resulting in the deaths of 1,198 passengers and crew. Larson vividly describes the chaos and heroism during the disaster, highlighting
individual acts of bravery and the tragic loss of life. Aftermath and ImpactThe sinking of the Lusitania provokes international outrage and shifts public opinion in the United States against Germany. President Wilson faces pressure to enter the war, illustrating the broader geopolitical consequences of the tragedy. Larson examines the investigation and
the blame placed on various parties, including Turner and the British Admiralty. Themes and MotifsThe Fragility of PeaceLarson explores the fragile nature of peace during wartime, emphasizing how small decisions can have catastrophic consequences. Human Resilience The narrative highlights human resilience in the face of disaster, showcasing acts
of courage and survival. The Ethics of Warfare The book raises questions about the ethics of warfare, particularly in targeting civilian vessels, and the moral dilemmas faced by military leaders. Erik Larson has a keen eye for detail and storytelling.
His previous works include "The Devil in the White City" and "In the Garden of Beasts," both acclaimed for their historical depth and engaging prose. Reader's Takeaway "Dead Wake" offers readers a poignant reminder of the human cost of war and the enduring impact of historical events. Larson's meticulous research and narrative skill provide an
emotional and intellectual journey, encouraging reflection on the complexities of history. Conclusion "Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania" is a masterful blend of history and narrative, bringing to life a pivotal moment in World War I. Erik Larson's engaging storytelling and attention to detail make this book a compelling read for history
enthusiasts and casual readers alike. The book not only recounts a significant historical event but also offers insights into the human experiences that define it, encouraging readers to explore the depths of this maritime tragedy further. These notes were contributed by members of the GradeSaver community. We are thankful for their contributions
and encourage you to make your own. Written by people who wish to remain anonymous Dead Wake is a nonfictional book that describes the events following the Lusitania's final journey in the year 1915. The Lusitania was the fastest ship liner at that time after setting a record for the fastest journey across the Atlantic Ocean in the year 1907. In the
months prior to the Lusitania departure, German submarines had successfully maneuvered the sea destroying many ships including ones that carried neutral merchants. On the day of the departure, Germany issued a warning in the newspapers warning any ships, including merchant ships, not to use the waters surrounding Britain. Any ship that
made its way to the German waters would be prone to attack. William Turner, the captain of the Lusitania, was confident in his skills to maneuver the sea without detection. He also had the fastest ship in the world. At the time of the departure, a German submarine, commanded by Walther Schwieger, was ordered to track down the American liner as
it makes its way across German waters. Walther had a reputation for ruthlessly killing thousands of innocent civilians who crossed German territories. As the Lusitania made its way through German waters, Turner gets word from British Intelligence warning him of a German submarine patrolling the waters. Turner gets word from British Intelligence warning him of a German submarine patrolling the waters.
perform a military routine that would help them determine their exact location. Oblivious of the Germans pinpoint the Lusitania destroying it and killing thousands of innocent civilians. A lot of passengers drowned while others
froze to death waiting for the rescue ships to arrive. The ships came in three hours after the attack saving those who had accessed lifeboats at the time of the attack. After the attack, the US president Woodrow Wilson eventually entered the war between Germany and Britain. You can help us out by revising, improving and updating this section.
Update this section After you claim a section you'll have 24 hours to send in a draft. An editor will review the submission and either publish your submission or provide feedback. Share — copy and redistribute the material for any
purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the licenser, and indicate if changes were made. You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the licenser, and indicate if changes were made.
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material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation. No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Jump to ratings and reviews From
the #1 New York Times bestselling author and master of narrative nonfiction comes the enthralling story of the LusitaniaOn May 1, 1915, 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 anxious.
Germany had declared the seas around Britain to be a war zone, and for months, its U-boats had brought terror to the North Atlantic. But the Lusitania was one of the era's great transatlantic "Greyhounds" 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. He knew, moreover, that his ship - the fastest then in service - could outrun any threat. 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, the captain of Unterseeboot-20, was happy to oblige.
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, mystery, and real-life suspense, Dead Wake brings to life a cast of evocative characters, from famed Boston bookseller Charles Lauriat to pioneering female architect Theodate Pope Riddle to President Wilson, a man lost to grief, dreading the
Larson is the author of nine books and one audio-only novella. His latest book, The Demon of Unrest, is a non-fiction thriller about the five months between Lincoln's election and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the
Blitz and Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania, both hit no. 1 on the list soon after launch. His chronicle of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, The Devil in the White City, was a finalist for the better part of a decade and is
currently in development at Disney Studios. Erik's In the Garden of Beasts, about how America's first ambassador to Nazi Germany and his daughter experienced the rising terror of Hitler's rule, is currently in development with StudioCanal and Playtone. Erik's first book of narrative nonfiction, Isaac's Storm, about the giant hurricane that destroyed
Galveston, Texas, in 1900, won the American Meteorology Society's prestigious Louis J. Battan Author's Award. The Washington Post called it the "Jaws of hurricane yarns." Erik is particularly pleased to have won the Chicago Public Library Foundation's 2016 Carl Sandburg Literary Award for Non-Fiction. His audio novella, No One Goes Alone, while
a work of fiction, is a ghost story based on real-life events and characters, including famed 19th-century psychologist William James. Erik refers to it as a ghost story with footnotes. He graduated summa cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied Russian history, language and culture; he received a masters in journalism from
Columbia University. After a brief stint at the Bucks County Courier Times, Erik became a staff writer for The Wall Street Journal, and later a contributing writer for Time Magazine. His magazine stories have appeared in The New Yorker, The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, and other publications. He has taught non-fiction writing at San Francisco State,
the Johns Hopkins Writing Seminars, the University of Oregon, and the Chuckanut Writers Conference in Bellingham, Wash., and has spoken to audiences from coast to coast. A former resident of Seattle, he now lives in Manhattan with his wife, a neonatologist, who is also the author of the nonfiction memoir, Almost Home, which, as Erik puts it,
"could make a stone cry." They have three daughters in far-flung locations and professions. Their beloved dog Molly resides in an urn on a shelf overlooking Central Park, where they like to think she now spends most of her time. Displaying 1 - 30 of 14,143 reviews May 31, 2016 When a new Erik Larson arrives, I drop everything and read it. In my book,
he's one of the few authors who can make history positively come alive. And his opening note held forth a big promise: "I give you now the saga of the Lusitania and the myriad forces, large and achingly small, that converged one lovely day in May 1915 to produce a tragedy of monumental scale, whose true character and import have long been
obscured in the mists of history." My first thought was: "WHAT true character and import? Everyone knows about the Lusitania - sunk by a U-2 torpedo and finally propelling America head-first into WW I." Well, after finishing, I stand corrected. The story of the Lusitania still offers up many secrets. Unlike Mr. Larson's former books, this one is slow
opening. The focus is not an individual (as it is in Isaac's Storm, the Devil in the White City, Thunderstruck and In The Garden of Beasts, with history as a backdrop), but squarely on the story of the Lusitania and its captain, William Thomas
Turner. But when the Lusitania begins its voyage? Wow! Nearly 2,000 passengers were aboard and also, 170 tons of Remington rifle ammunition, making it a clear and attractive target to the Germans. The passengers were aboard and also, 170 tons of Remington rifle ammunition, making it a clear and attractive target to the Germans. The passengers were not unaware that U-2 boats were bringing terror to the North Atlantic seas. We meet several of them throughout these pages
the ones who will live, the ones who will die. And we also catch many glimpses of the U.S. president, Woodrow Wilson, a widower who is distracted by a new (and ultimately, enduring) love affair that diverts his attention from the world stage. The book is filled with questions worth asking: why did the Admiralty not provide an escort to the Lusitania,
given that the ship carried a vital cargo of ammunition and artillery shells? Why did British intelligence obsessively protect the HMS Orion and provide no protection to the Lusitania? Why did they not divert he Lusitania to the newer and safer North Channel route? And most of all, "why was the ship left on its own, with a proven killer of men and
ships dead ahead in its path?" Did the British deliberately set up the Lusitania to force America's hand to enter the war? Hanging over the story of the Lusitania had departed precisely on time, if Capt. Turner had not made a final turn to
starboard, had the torpedo failed (60 percent of torpedoes DID fail), there would not be a Lusitania story. And one last question remains: did the Lusitania, in fact, cause the U.S. to enter the war or was there more to the story? Read Dead Wake and find out!fiction-based-on-history inhumanityJune 29, 2023Dead Wake is named a 2015 notable non
fiction book by the Washington Post The track lingered on the surface like a long pale scar. In maritime vernacular, the trail of fading disturbance, whether from ship or torpedo, was called a "dead wake." On May 7, 1914, only a few years after that most famous of ocean-liners had had an unfortunate encounter with an iceberg on its maiden voyage
RMS Lusitania, popularly referred to as "Lucy," having already crossed the Atlantic dozens of times, this time carrying 1,962 souls, was sunk by a German U-boat off the Irish coast. Almost 1200 people perished. Erik Larson casts his perceptive eyes on the event, looking for explanations. Why was the ship sunk? Had it been possible for the ship to
have avoided its fate? What were the global circumstances at the time and how did those effect the disaster? Who and what was on the ship? Why? What was the big deal about the Lusitania affect American entry into The Great War? The New York Times
headline - From PBS We all have preconceptions, notions that hardly seem worth examining. I expect for most of us, the details of the Lusitania are clouded by the fog of time. We might believe that, as with the sinking of the Lusitania are clouded by the fog of time. Turns out the reality was far different.
Artist rendering of the sinking - from Cinewiki.wikispaces.comLarson looks at events in several threads. Mostly he follows the events on the Lusitania and on the German sub (U-20 - U-boat is an abbreviation of Unterseeboot, or undersea boat) that would bring it down. In parallel, he looks at the politics involved in, not so much the causes of World
War I, but in the stages between the commencement of hostilities and the eventual drawing of the USA into the war. He looks at the milieu in which American president Woodrow Wilson existed, politically and personally. He looks at the milieu in which American president Woodrow Wilson existed, politically and personally.
stops, also, for a look at the sad accumulation of the victims in Ireland. Larson offers a view of the Lusitania that might not be obvious to those of us looking back a hundred years. We might, for example, think of it as a relatively slow moving ocean liner, but it was the fastest civilian ship of its time. Its exceptional speed was a major selling point. There
is plenty more detail about the ship, the different sorts of lifeboats, with their potential benefits and downsides, the unusual hull it used. Lucy carried a relatively inexperienced crew, due to so many able-bodied seamen having been drawn into the military. New, unusual life vests were used on the ship, and training in their use was lacking, as was
training in using the lifeboats. The sinking was used for recruiting - in Britain and the USAOn the other side, it is remarkable how fragile U-boats were, and the limitations they faced in pursuing their mission. Larson offers us a look aboard the sub that did the deed, captain's log and all. How fast were these boats? What was their range? What was
their mission, their command structure? What was the physical environment like for submariners? What was the mindset of the captain, of his crew? Lots to look at here, eye-opening stuff. Don't sign me up for life
on a sub. The wrecked U-20 after a failed attempt to scuttle - from Lusitania.netAnd of course there was the interaction between militaries. How did they track them? What were the capabilities of the super-secret Room 40? What was the
decision process the German command used in deciding how to use this powerful weapon? Room 40 - from Lusitania.netOne thing Larson does is follow the narrative of several of the passengers aboard the big boat. This brings the disaster away from technical details to actual human experience. You will get to know some of the passengers, and learn
their fates. There is a wealth of information in Dead Wake. For example, the biggest surprise for most readers, and perhaps the most controversial element in the book is the suggestion that Britain did not exactly do all it might have to protect Lucy from enemy attack, as there were some at the highest levels of government who believed that such an
event might hasten the enlistment of the USA into the war. There were other factors for sure that contributed to why Lucy was where she was, but most of those lack the bitter flavor of dark calculation. And maintaining the sour taste is a description of how shameless members of the admiralty sought to evade personal responsibility for
the sinking by pointing fingers at a designated patsy. Despite the denials all around that the Lusitania was purely a civilian ship, the fact was that it was carrying a considerable supply of military material America was using
physical realities of the Lusitania is fascinating, and looking at the probable decision-making involved is enraging. This is not to say that there are no rents in the hull taking on a bit of the briny. While it seemed clear that tracking individual closer to sea level, I found that most of these passages were not all that engaging. It also seemed not entirely
clear that Woodrow Wilson's domestic situation was necessarily all that important in his reluctance to bring the USA into the war. On the other hands informed of their actions contributed to the ultimate catastrophe. Information that
could have identified a sub in a shipping lane was available, but was not put together in time. Very reminiscent of 9/11. Our species certainly seems well practiced in learning nothing from history. One contributing factor was a corporate cost-cutting measure that kept Lucy from making her best time across the Atlantic. Had she been allowed to use
all four of her boilers instead of only three, she would never have encountered U-20. The Deepwater Horizon disaster, and many more such incidents remind us that pursuit of the almighty dollar/pound/euro/(insert your currency here) will always be assigned a higher value than human life or the safety of the environment for many of the people
Germany would be ignored to our everlasting regret. Dead Wake is a wonderful piece of writing, not only diving down into details of what is probably a murky subject for most of us, offering a greater understanding of the causes and implications of the
Online is a wonderful source for all things LucyVideo from the National Archives of passengers arriving and Lucy embarking on its final voyage- the first 1:50 is mostly people getting out of cars, so feel free to skip ahead a bitA 1918 animation of the sinking Arthur Conan Doyle's story Danger! was written about 18 months before the outbreak of WWI
It anticipated in considerable detail the submarine warfare to come. You can read it on Gutenberg. In the preface to the 1918 collection in which it appears, Doyle noted that he attempted to present his notions to the government, noting that he:...did indeed adopt every possible method, that he personally approached leading naval men and powerful
editors, that he sent three separate minutes upon the danger to various public bodies, notably to the Committee for National Defence, and that he touched upon the matter in an article in The Fortnightly Review. In some unfortunate way subjects of national welfare are in this country continually subordinated to party politics, so that a self-evident
proposition, such as the danger of a nation being fed from without, is waved aside and ignored, because it will not fit in with some general political shibboleth. If this reminds you at all of Bill Clinton and Richard Clarke trying to warn the incoming Bush administration of the danger presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should. Other Erik Larson books longer presented by Osama bin Laden, it should be a should be 
 have read----- 2003 - The Devil in the White City----- 2006 - Thunderstruck----- 2011 - In the Garden of Beasts----- 2017 - Isaac's Storm - not reviewedamerican-history military-and-intelligence-non-fic August 23, 2019"He saw the body of the torpedo moving well ahead of the wake, through water he described as being 'a beautiful green.' The
torpedo 'was covered with a silvery phosphorescence, you might term it, which was caused by the air escaping from the motors.'He said, 'It was a beautiful sight.'" The last known photo of the Lusitania. The term unsinkable had been obliterated from references regarding great ocean liners after the Titanic sunk in 1912. The impossible had already
happened. In 1915 the Lusitania had made 202 voyages across the Atlantic. She was a floating beauty, spacious, luxurious, and fast. She was capable of 25 knots and could quickly leave behind any German U-boats who may have had thoughts of trying to sink her. Captain William Thomas Turner was not too worried about the Germans, despite the
increase in the number of ships being sunk. He couldn't fathom that they would be so bold or so cruel as to sink a ship filled with women and children. There had to be some niggling doubt though when the Germans sent a telegram warning people to reconsider taking trips across the Atlantic. Captain William Thomas Turner in that fateful year 1915.
was somewhat baffled at the number of people still choosing to travel through an aggressive war zone. We've all heard the adage all is fair in love and war, but in the past there had always been a few rules in war regarding innocent people. Walther Schwieger, the captain of the Unterseeboot-20, didn't adhere to any rules except the rule of
engagement. His country was at war with the British, and a ship owned by the British, whether it was transporting supplies for the war effort or transporting supplies for the war effort or transporting supplies for the war effort or transporting noncombatants, was of equal interest to him. He, after all, was competing with his fellow U-Boat captains to see who could sink the most tonnage. Well, the Lusitania, at 31,550 tons, would put
him over the top. Walther SchwiegerSome people had booked passage, but had decided at the last moment not to go. "Alta Piper, the daughter of the famous medium, never made it aboard; neither did she refund her ticket. Unable to ignore the night's voices, but also apparently unable to step forth and just cancel, she chose the path taken by
indecisive people throughout history and spent the morning of departure packing and repacking the ship's departure."I have a feeling she had an insistent tingle in the back of her neck. Erik Larson does a wonderful job introducing us to the passengers
My favorite was Charles Lauriat, an antiquarian bookseller, who talked a client into letting him borrow Charles Dicken's very own copy of A Christmas Carol with notes from the great writer about a lawsuit he was fighting in the margins. He wanted to take it to London to allow another researcher to copy down Dicken's notes. This might be the
ultimate example, exhibit A, in NOT letting a friend borrow a book. There was also Theodate Pope, the famous pioneering architect, who managed to break into a profession completely dominated by men. Because they survived, Larson is able to share with us some very personal observations of what happened before, during, and after the torpedo
struck the ship. Part of the problem is there was 1,959 passengers and crew on board, and the ship sank in 18 minutes. How much time is lost while you decide if the ship would go down. Pandemonium ensued. 1,195
perished. Lots of questions were asked after the event. The picking up of extra, as it turned out very unlucky, passengers from another ship delayed their departure and increased the risk of U-Boats having time to get into position. The black smoke poured from only three of the four funnels, which cut the speed of the ship from 25 knots to 21 knots,
but saved 1600 tons of coal, a money saving decision made by Cunard due to fewer people risking the trip than normal. This reduction in engines also added a day of travel. Turner did not use a zigzag motion once he reached U-Boat infested waters. The biggest question which didn't receive enough attention or consideration was where was the Royal
Navy? They should have been escorting the liner once it was this close to the Irish coast. Change one thing and the Lusitania would not have sunk on this trip. Turner came under heavy criticism, even from Winston Churchill himself, but was eventually cleared of all wrongdoings. Schwieger, if he felt any remorse for killing so many innocent people,
never shared it. He did sink the most tonnage so bully for him. I hope he got a f**king plaque.I, for many years, like many America in the war. America did not enter the war for another two years. The reason given, other than the moral reasons for coming to the defense
of our cousins in Britain, was the famous Zimmermann telegram. Larson also threads through the plot the trials and tribulations of Woodrow Wilson as he tries to convince Edith Bolling Galt to marry him. You would think the poor woman wore bacon underwear the way he convorted after her. So many things had to go wrong for the Lusitania to come
under the cold, calculating eyes of Schwieger and the gunsights of U-Boat 20. All of them lined up, even the final blow when Turner shifted directions at the perfect moment to give Schwieger the angle he needed. It is a compelling story told by a veteran writer who knows how to pace and weave a story that, even when you know the outcome, you
can't help but throw your bag together, hop up the gangplank, and marvel at the devil in the details. The wreck of the Lusitania at the bottom of the ocean. If you wish to see more of my most recent book and movie reviews, visit also have a Facebook blogger page at: 15, 2024 After listening to Dead Wake (Audiobook), I walked away with mixed
feelings. On one hand, the audiobook excels at painting a vivid picture of what it was like to embark on a passenger voyage during that era. The narration brings to life the shock and emotional devastation of the Lusitania's sinking, giving listeners a deeply personal sense of the tragedy. Larson's ability to humanize the passengers, introducing their
stories in an almost novelistic, conversational way, adds richness to the experience. However, as a history book, Dead Wake fell short for me. While the audiobook is filled with heart-wrenching details that tug at your emotions, I found that it sacrificed deeper discussions of the larger historical context. There were moments where it felt more like a
novel than a comprehensive historical account, especially toward the end, where the focus on personal stories began to detract from the broader tragedy. Audiobook version: Dead Wake (Audiobook) The narrator skillfully conveyed the details of the ship's construction and operation, which were interesting, but I would have preferred more focus on the
political and military forces at play, particularly Kaiser Wilhelm's move toward unrestricted submarine warfare. One element that felt oddly out of place in the audiobook was the emphasis on President Wilson's romance with his soon-to-be second wife. While this subplot might have served as a lighthearted distraction from the tragedy, it seemed
 misplaced and irrelevant to the central events. Ultimately, while the audiobook captures the emotional gravity of the Lusitania's sinking and offers a compelling narrative, it left me wishing for more depth on the larger historical impact. January 14, 2016 This reminded me a lot of the movie Titantic not just because it's about a disaster at sea, but also
would have been a lot shorter and better without the romantic subplot. Only in this case it was U.S. President Woodrow Wilson and Edith Bolling Galt instead of Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet. I might have mixed something up there. This is
part of the continuing trend of Erik Larson's books for me. He has this weird knack of being able to write some other kind of element to give it a hook it doesn't really need. He can't just tell us the story behind the 1893 World's Fair, he has to make
 half the book about a serial killer. (Some people would tell you that it's vice versa as to what's good about that one). Or instead of doing a non-fiction pop history novel about the invention of the wireless by Marconi, he had to tie it into the capture of a famous murderer of the day. Giving a day-to-day account of living in Nazi Germany wasn't good
enough so he had to put half the focus on a promiscuous American woman and her boring father in Berlin. So this time out we've got the sinking of the Lusitania, a fascinating historical event about which many intriguing questions remain to this day, and yet a good chunk of this book is spent detailing how President Wilson found love again after the
death of his first wife. If this was a book about Wilson, or if it was some kind of deep dive into his response to the attack where knowing his mindset at the time is spent on detailing how their courtship progressed. However since none of those things really
matter I had that that same feeling while reading that I had when watching the aforementioned Titantic: Quit falling in love and hit the damn iceberg already. (Only it's a German U-boat instead of a chunk of ice this time.) As usual with the parts I actually care about Larson does a pretty decent job of creating narrative history to give us a vivid account
of what life was like for the passengers and crew of the ship as well as the Germans on the submarine. He also gives us a good idea of the touchy political situation that existed between the various nations involved because of World War I. He does seem to prefer doling out trivia and anecdotes rather than dealing in any meaningful way with the biggers and crew of the submarine.
questions of the event. The conspiracy theories about why England didn't do more to protect the ship and speculation about the what caused a secondary explosion after the torpedo hit are barely touched on, but at the same time I know what kind of wallpaper was in the reading salon on board. Or I learned that Woody and Edith ate chicken salad on
their wedding night, but nothing is said about the critical role she later played in his administration after he suffered a stroke later. It's not bad, but it's also a fairly shallow look that seems more interested in telling you what happened rather than really digging into the questions of how or why it did. It's like the Hollywood screenplay version of
history. With romance! 2015 disaster non-fiction April 26, 2016When I came across a radio interview with Erik Larson, talking about his new Lusitania book, Dead Wake, I knew I had to have it. I was excited. Like, I'm going to buy this on my phone as soon as I park my car excited. As many of you know, I'm deep into a World War I reading project. I've
collected so many new titles that my kids are never going to college. The Lusitania sinking was a moral turning point in the war. It turned American opinion inexorably against Germany. It also sowed no small amount of disarray in German submarine policy. It is not quite the Pearl Harbor it is made out to be, but it is immensely important. Thus, the
Lusitania is a required topic in WWI studies. (Also, it should be noted, I am a Titanic buff, and the Lusitania sinking is a close cousin in the disaster family). So there was no doubt I'd read this book. That didn't mean I expected to love it. A couple things gave me pause. First, I am not an unabashed Larson admirer. I liked Isaac's Storm, his book on the
Galveston hurricane, but I liked it in the sense that I like the sandwich I eat for lunch every day. That is to say nourishing, but nothing about the Lusitania when he started researching the book. It's foolish to expect a person to be an expert before
he starts his research, but his lack of basic knowledge (such as the fact that the ship sank in 1915 and American did not enter the war until 1917) gave me pause. I didn't want to read some hasty work of dilettantism meant to capitalize on centenary interest of the lost liner. My worries were for naught. This is, in fact, an excellent book. It is not the
definitive account of the Lusitania (I think Diana Preston's book is more thorough), but it is far and away the best. Every book about a sinking ship is eventually compared to Walter Lord's A Night to Remember. It is a natural law. Nothing can exceed Lord, of course, but Larson does a damn fine imitation. The Titanic sank at a stately 2 hours and 40
minutes after striking an iceberg on April 14, 1912. That lengthy time-period is part of the reason for the many dramatic retellings. Everyone on board that doomed vessel had time to take a breath, look hard into their own soul, and decide what kind of person they were. Managing Director J. Bruce Ismay stepped into a lifeboat. Isidor and Ida Strauss
did not. Whatever else their decisions meant (life or death, chiefly), they are godsends to the dramatist interested in the human ability to flourish or crumble under duress. The Lusitania, on the other hand, was hit by a single torpedo fired by mysterious
sympathetic explosions (coal-dust or burst steam pipes, most likely; almost certainly not munitions) that destroyed the Lusitania's steering and power. The ship was locked into a turn with the propellers still churning forward. She sank in eighteen minutes while developing such a severe starboard list that her starboard boats swung far away from the
decks, while the portside boats couldn't be lowered because they were flush against the hull. The evacuation was a disaster, compounded by the loss of many trained crewmembers to the navy. There was no order, no law, no "women and children first." The ship sank within sight of land, but in terms of help, they were so far from civilization they
might as well have been on the Moon. 1,198 people died: 1,195 passengers and crew, plus 3 German stowaways. (There was a large percentage of kids on board, including infants. In terms of standing a chance at survival on that tilting, plunging deck... It might be best not to think about it). The chaotic nature of the sinking makes for a difficult
narrative. Larson solves this problem by paring down his scope to focus on just a handful of people, chief among them the Boston bookseller Charles Lauriat, the female architect Theodate Pope, and crewmember Leslie Morton. He also chooses to mostly ignore the better-known personages. For instance, Alfred Vanderbilt, the ship's most famous (and
wealthy) passenger, rates only 6 mentions in the index. Larson also spends a great deal of time with Captain Turner, the Lusitania's master - like Captain Smith, an old sea dog who never learned a new trick - and the U-20's commander, Walter Schwieger. Oddly, Larson also devotes an inordinate amount of space to President Woodrow Wilson and his
burgeoning love affair with Edith Bolling Galt. He quotes extensively from Wilson's moony letters. In a different book, say, a biography of Wilson, this would make perfect sense. Here, it's just a needless distraction. The space could have been better served by finding another passenger to follow. (Or with some freaking pictures! How does a major
release like this not rate an inset?) Dead Wake is structured like a suspense thriller. Larson utilizes short, punchy chapters that cut between Wilson's maudlin romance in Washington, D.C.; the intelligence operatives in Great Britain's secret Room 40; the curmudgeonly Captain Turner and his wealthy passengers on the Lusitania (this is the second
Lusitania title I've read in short order that ignores the very existence of steerage passengers); and Captain Schweiger and his crew of the small but formidable U-20. The scenes set aboard the U-20 are among the book's best. Larson admits to enjoying this part the most during the writing and research process, and it shows. He fills these sections with
pungent, tactile details about the cramped conditions, the myriad dangers, and the many horrible smells a WWI submariner faced. First there was the basal reek of three dozen men who never bathed, who wore leather clothes that did not breathe, and shared one small lavatory. The toilet from time to time imparted to the boat the scent of a cholera
hospital and could be flushed only when the U-boat was on the surface or at shallow depths, lest the undersea pressure blow material back into the vessel. This tended to happen to novice officers and crew, and was called a "U-boat baptism." The odor of diesel fuel infiltrated all corners of the boat, ensuring that every cup of cocoa and piece of bread
tasted of oil. Then came the fragrances that emanated from the kitchen long after meals were cooked, most notably that close cousin to male body odor, day-old fried onions. The attack on the Lusitania and her sinking is told in vivid, lucid prose. That first turmoil, that first bubble of foam, was the expulsion of compressed air from the submarine's
launching tube as the torpedo exited. The torpedo itself was 20 feet long and 20 inches in diameter; its nose, shaped like the top of a corn silo, contained 350 pounds of TNT and an explosive called Hexanite...It moved at about 35 knots, or 40 miles an hour, powered by compressed air stored in a tank toward its nose, just behind the compartment that
contained the explosives. The air rushed against the pistons in its engine, geared to spin two propellers, one clockwise, the other counterclockwise, the other counterclockwise, to keep the torpedo advanced, the water rushing past its nose turned a small propeller, which unscrewed a safety device that prevented detonation during
storage. This propeller slipped from the nose and fell to the sea bottom, thereby exposing a triggering mechanism that upon impact with a ship's hull would fire a small charge into the larger body of explosives...The track lingered on the surface like a long pale scar. In maritime vernacular, this trail of fading disturbance, whether from ship or torpedo
was called a "dead wake." I mentioned above that Larson focuses his narrative on a small number of passengers. Before the sinking he spends a great deal of time on their biographies; a lot of this detail feels mundane and misplaced. You might wonder why you have to learn so much about Charles Lauriat's bookselling business. Well, the payoff comes
when Larson shifts into the Lusitania's final agony. You are very much invested in the stories of the passengers and crew struggling to survive because so much time has been devoted to them. (It's strange, but I when I read, I generally feel a stronger emotional connection to fictional characters than to actual historical people, because fictional
characters are given more detail, more life. Nonfiction personages often come across like the stone monuments that now memorialize them. Larson does a good job of making real people seem, well, real). I've now got several Lusitania books under my belt. I didn't learn anything new in Dead Wake. Indeed, there is more information to be found in
other sources. However, this is by far the most compelling, the most riveting presentation of this story, and also one of the better works of history I've read in awhile. Whether you're a World War I buff celebrating the centenary, or a casually interested reader laying beneath the sun while on the deck of a hopefully-non-sinking cruise ship, this is a
great choice. history lusitania maritime-history November 8, 2015Larson writes wonderful narrative non fiction, and in this book he has surpassed his own self. The amount of research that went into this book is staggering. It doesn't just cover the bombing of the Lusitania, it covers everything going once at the time and more. What it is like inside a
 submarine, the roles of the crew members, how it feels and even how it smells. president Wilson's grief at the death of his wife and his courting of his second wife. The career of the Captain of the Lusitania and the quirks in his personality. What the ship looked like, inside and out, the decorations, the food, the labor involved. The passengers, the
famous and those not. The politics of the day, what secrets were known when and how. It is extraordinarily detailed but I was never bored, found it all fascinating. So much history set down for me to enjoy. There is only one Larson book I was not crazy about, that one remains half finished, but this is an author whose books I buy to reread and savor.
By the end of the book, I had a clear and concise picture of so many things I had never knew before. Also had gotten to know some of the people on the ship and was devastated that some of them were the ones who died. A horrible tragedy bought to life, to be remembered and learned from, if only. Amazing January 3, 2022"I am afraid a more serious
breach may at any time occur, for they seem to have no regard for the consequences. "When it comes to writing historical narratives Erik Larson is one of the best in the business. He is so good at using a pivotal event/moment in history as a point to begin examining the age in which it occurred. His books are always about the era through the lens of
one event. "Dead Wake" proves to be no exception. Some strengths of the book include Part II of the text when Larson writes short quick chapters, jumping from four main locales (U-20, the Lusitania, England, and Washington DC). The quick pacing makes the reader barrel toward a climax that they know is inevitable. It is a nice device. Actually the
entire book moves along at a quick pace, but once the torpedo hits the Lusitania Larson kicks the book into high gear and the reader feels like they are being propelled full bore down the halls of history. You will find yourself holding your breath as Larson depicts the 18 minutes it took the mighty ocean liner to sink. Like all Larson, a single event is
used to illuminate an age. And like all great books about history, "Dead Wake" makes it real and relevant by expertly recreating the humanity of its players. They are us, and we are them. If Erik Larson writes a book I will read it! June 16, 2023Why I chose to read this book: 1. although I've heard the basic story of the demise of the Lusitania, I wanted to
learn more. A couple reviews from some GR friends were enough to encourage me to add it to my WTR list; and, 2. June 2023 is my self-appointed "Nonfiction Month". Praises: 1. this extremely well-researched book is written in a riveting narrative style. Author Erik Larson includes copious pages of Acknowledgements and Footnotes, as well as an
extensive Bibliography. Quotes are embedded in the text, making for an uninterrupted flow in reading. Two maps and a photo of the Lusitania were also a nice touch; 2. I learned a LOT about the different arenas involved in this tragedy; the various people tied to this disaster, directly and indirectly; the logistics of the Lusitania as well as the German
submarine, U-Boat 20; the frustrating politics of the British Admiralty and its secretive "Room 40"; the actual sinking of the Lusitania by a single torpedo and a mysterious second explosion; the ordeal of the survivors and the identification of the deceased; and eventually, who blamed whom during the inquiry, and who was guilty of what; 3. Larson
clearly outlines "a chance confluence of forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down. He makes the reader think that if only one of those "forces" that brought this luxury ocean liner down.
 past various certain landmarks, on its final voyage to England. Interesting Literary Note: Lusitania passenger, Theodate Pope, was under the care of a Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell for depression by following his infamous "Rest Cure". Interestingly, he was also the physician to author Charlotte Perkins Gilman who wrote The Yellow Wall-Paper. Gilman stated
that she penned her short story to warn future patients of this particular doctor's quackery, and that his "treatment" almost drove her to insanity!Overall Thoughts:Is it true that Winston Churchill used the Lusitania as bait to draw the United States into the the Great War? References in this book strongly support that. I now have some very weird
thoughts about that man! Also, contrary to popular belief, the U.S. did not join the War until over 2 years later, due to a variety of mitigating circumstances that occurred after the sinking of the Lusitania! After reading this book, I learned so much more than I thought I would about this particular disaster. I will definitely read more by this
author!2023-reads american-new-york disaster May 9, 2016Driving back from a vacation to Tampa Bay followed by having to mow my lawn after 10 days away allowed me to finish this 13 hour audiobook in about 24 hours. Also, it is a Scott Brick audio which is a huge bonus! Larson does it again with an intriguing look into a major event in history. It is
well researched and he does a great job integrating other anecdotes of the time to create a picture of America before they joined WWI and the antagonism between England and Germany early on during the war. While I think this book would be best appreciated by someone with an interest in history, there is enough going on here that I think some
may be surprised at how much they enjoy it. I will say that even though I did only listen to it, I think some may take in the historical details better listening than reading (kinda like watching and being fascinated by a show on the History channel about something you never thought would interest you) 2016 audio gr awards 2015 February 21,
2016Excellent Retelling of the Sinking of the Sinking of the Lusitanial don't read a lot of nonfiction. But Erik Larson's books read like novels. He sinking of the Lusitanial don't read a lot of nonfiction. But Erik Larson's books read like novels. He sinking of the Lusitanial don't read a lot of nonfiction. But Erik Larson's that contain a compelling story. He fills the books with details that bring the time, place, and people to life. He does an enormous amount of research. I loved Larson's The
Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America, a story about the Chicago world's fair and the convergence of two men, one the fair's architect, the other a serial killer. So when I saw he'd come out with a new book, I got hold of the audio as soon as I could get it. The story was not quite as compelling as The
Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America. Perhaps in part this was because there were stories about many people instead of the focus on the two main characters as in The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America. Still, Larson did his usual excellent job.And
of course, since I live in New York City, I am fascinated by NY City history. Larson covers the last voyage of the Lusitania from the beginning. He starts with the preparation of the ship for launch from Pier 54 didn't yet exist in
1915, the year the Lusitania went down. It's fascinating and the reader feels like he or she is right there with the passengers as they board with their huge and unwieldy trunks and their elaborate travelling outfits. The German government placed a warning advertisement in fifty U.S. newspapers in April, warning that Germany was at war with Britain
and that the safety of those travelling on trans-Atlantic crossings could not be quaranteed. However, no one took the German warnings entirely seriously. First of all, the previous rules of engagement had dictated that ships carrying civilians could not be attacked. Also, Cunard, the owner of the Lusitania, stood to lose a lot of money if it cancelled its
trans-Atlantic voyages. Tragically, there were more children and babies on this voyage than usual. Also, in an ironic twist of fate, another ship, the SS Cameronia, which was supposed to embark at around the same time as the Lusitania at
the last minute. The ship launched (a bit late for various reasons) on May 1, 1915. Larson details the trans-Atlantic voyage, which was largely pleasant and uneventful until the fateful day of May 7, 1915. The ship was headed for Liverpool, England. Its captain, William Thomas Turner, was a capable and experienced sea captain. Larson also reconstructs
the viewpoint of the Captain of the Captain of the German U-boat, U-20, that sunk the Lusitania on May 7. This man, Kapitänleutnant Walther Schwieger, was a talented and dedicated captain, intent on sinking neutral or enemy ships, as this was his job. He was also, apparently, a good man. He was heartsick when he realized that women and children died in droves
when the Lusitania sank. U-20 hit the Lusitania with a single torpedo on May 7 a little after 2 pm a few miles off the Irish coast. The ship sunk in about twenty minutes. There was also a second explosion onboard, presumably caused by steam pipes on the ship. More than a thousand lives were lost. Several famous people died in the wreck, including
Alfred Vanderbilt, who reportedly gave his life jacket to a mother with a child, even though he couldn't swim; writer Elbert Hubbard, known for A Message to Garcia; and theatrical producer Charles Frohman.Larson follows the stories of several lesser known passengers, some who survived, others who didn't. For example, he follows Richard "Preston'
Pritchard, a handsome and popular medical student who apparently died in the sinking. Connecticut resident Theodate Pope survived. She was one of the first female architects in America. She was one of the sinking. Connecticut resident Theodate Pope survived. She was one of the first female architects in America. She was one of the sinking.
greater faith. I was amazed how many facing death were sustained by their spiritual faith and were able to be calm while dealing with disaster. Many survivors reported mystical experiences while waiting to be rescued. However, in other ways, things haven't changed much since 1915. I found it interesting that the authorities (in particular Winston
Churchill) tried to pin the blame for the sinking on Captain Turner. However, there was an inquest in which Turner was exonerated. I don't think that brave man, who did survive, was in any way responsible. He stayed with the ship until its last moments. Here are some telling facts: The Lusitania's speed was limited to less than the 25 knots per hour of
which she was capable because Cunard Lines required Captain Turner to cut costs by using only three of Lusitania's four smoke stacks. If the ship was running at top speed, perhaps she could have outrun the U-boat. Although the British knew that U-20 was quite close to the Lusitania, they never warned the ship because they were concerned about
revealing their secret operations for decoding the German's encoded messages. By the time the Lusitania received a message about U-20 it was too late. Although the Lusitania had been promised British warships to escort it, those warships to escort it.
want to risk losing any more battle ships. The designers of the collapsible boats did not test them to make sure they were easily deployed in an emergency. Apparently the boats, but Cunard did not focus on passenger safety in the event of an
emergency. No one believed that the Germans would actually sink a passenger boat, as this went counter to previous rules of engagement. One wonders whether the British government deliberately allowed the Lusitania to be destroyed to force America to enter World War I. As it happened, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson did in fact bring the U.S. into
the war shortly after the destruction of the Lusitania. In any case, Scott Brick is the ideal audio reader for this type of material. His expressive voice brings Larson speak on February 2, 2016.. He was as engaging and interesting a speaker as he is a writer... But he was funnier
and more charming in person. August 7, 2017 "The Devil is in the detail but details that for me made this book such a worthwhile read. Living in Ireland I thought I was informed through history classes in school of the events surrounding the sinking of
the Lusitania off the cost of Kinsale Head in Co. Cork however I was surprised by the information I gained by reading Dead Wake. Published to coincide with the 100th Anniversary in May of this great Maritime tragedy I think this book will inform a whole new generation about a tragedy about an important event in History. The book is extremely well
researched and supported by extensive references and notes. I read this book on my kindle and was delighted to see that by clicking on a number I was taking to a link providing me with the source of a fact, statement or piece of information. I enjoyed reading about the luxury of the ship as opposed to the dreadful conditions of the Submarine and felt
I really got a feel for how difficult life on board a sub could be in times of war. There is an air of suspense throughout the book even though we know the outcome the author manages to hold our attention and keep us engrossed. We also learn a little about the passengers on board the Lusitania but I never got emotionally attached to the characters
and this worked well as the book was about facts and events and providing the reader with enough information to form an opinion as to how a ship like the Lusitania ended its voyage in such tragic circumstances. This is a book for readers who have an interest in books about war and events in history. It's well written and researched and I came away
feeling I had learned something new. I will certainly check out some more reads by this author as this was an engrossing and informative read. February 23, 2016Wow....This is an all-embracing historical heartbreak story....a tragedy that could have been avoided. The seas were a war zone ...Right from the start, we learn that their were delays leaving
New York... (America was not yet at war vet in May, 1915, against Germany). Red flag warnings were everywhere, They were suppose to run the ship on 4 engines, but got by with 3. The German government warned Americans that traveling on trans-Atlantic wasn't safe, Other safety conditions like respect for fog were ignored. Nobody was taking
warning signs serious....let alone be preventive- in - the areas of 'all' safety, to the level we would expect. It's painful to see (now, in hindsight), all the many corrections that would have saved thousands of lives. (more babies onboard than usual, too)!....This non-fiction book reads like fiction!!!! I WISH IT WAS! Unfortunately ...these are true events.
All the events leading up to the ships final crossing was energizing. I found it absolutely fascinating reading the details about the ship - the submarine - William Thomas Turner, (his professional growth to well respected and qualified Captain of the Lusitania), and his personal life at home. It was especially fascinating hearing from the people who
survived..... and sad to learn which characters didn't. Eric Larrson's detail descriptions were extraordinary!!! - the ship- the crew- the submarine- the passengers- ... the supmarine- t
Devil in the White City"....(both stories will be hard to ever forget) I also enjoyed "In the Garden of Beasts"....(3 for 3)... I quess I'm a fan of this author...and I didn't even know it! How'd that happen? lolTalented authors ... gotta love em!!!March 24, 2022Larson has really delivered on this book. I have read all of his works and his style appeals to me.
In this book, the subject appeals to me as well since it gets less attention than the sinking of the Titanic but has much more historic significance. Europe was caught up in the horror of WWI but the US was remaining isolated and neutral. The Lusitania, carrying 189 American passengers in her total count of 2,000 souls aboard, was the largest and
fastest of the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and departed New York on May 1st, 1915 for Liverpool, England. She was in imminent danger of being attacked by U-boats off the Cunard Line luxury ships and the Cun
torpedoed off of the Old Head of Kinsale in Ireland and sank like a stone. Only 764 passengers survived and over 600 bodies were never found. The Germans rejoiced while the rest of the world was horrified. The author provides the reader with a plethora of information surrounding the week prior to the sinking and the after effect that it had on the
US and Britain. He also attempts to answer the question as to why this incident did not bring the US into the War. I highly recommend this book. Note: I have been to the Old Head of Kinsale in the Republic of Ireland and visited the monument which commemorates the sinking of the Lusitania. Impressive. September 30, 2019 Not enthralling for me
personally, but otherwise excellently done. This is a supremely well-researched account of the Lusitania was sadly little. Being educated in such a significant historic event is the clear benefit of this book. Unlike some historical accounts,
however, the narrative struggles to captivate in any meaningful way outside of all the interesting facts. More textbook than creative nonfiction, in other words. Might have been better if Larson focused closely on one "character" arc so we're grounded in the experience. Instead we get small snippets about multitudes, and a lot of talk about the
honest reaction. It is interesting. It is accurate. It is extensively researched. It is about an event, the torpedo sinking of the British steamship passenger liner, the Lusitania, in 1915 by a German submarine. The death toll came to 1,198 persons, including passengers, crew and 3 German stowaways. There were 1,962 on board. Only 764 survived. It is
less about the people involved in the catastrophe, even if many details are given. The only person I came close to understanding was the captain. He did not survive the war, as Turner did, so what we learn about him is predominantly through his logbooks, wireless messages
and a few words from acquaintances, one being his fiancée. I can in no way say that Larson's research is lacking. If anything I would have preferred that he edited out some of all the details presented. I don't need to know a passenger's ticket number or that Mr. X wore a pink vest or the dimensions of a book brought on board. I believe Larson was
trying to recreate the atmosphere on the boat, and he certainly did, but the details were excessive. There are parts about President Wilson's sorrow at his wife's death and his subsequent love affair. I found this thread scarcely relevant and annoyingly told. This book is written in such a manner as to increase suspense and excitement. The story follows
several threads. As suspense mounts in a thread you switch to another. Over and over again, with increasing rapidity and shorter ends to you get at you near the end of a film on TV. The second half of the book which describes the sinking is more engrossing. In this section there is also a discussion of blame. This too
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was fascinating. Who was most at fault? The captain because he didn't zigzag and didn't follow a course further from shore? Or did they simply need an easy scapegoat to divert suspicion? Or the British Admiralty? Why wasn't the Lusitania given an escort? The Admiralty had thorough knowledge through secret decoding information. Or the Cunard Line? Should they be blamed? It was them that ordered Turner to only use three of the four boilers, thus lowering the liner's speed, making it more susceptible to submarine attack. Many passengers chose the Lusitania because of the boat's speed. They were not informed that the speed had been lowered. Or was there a conspiracy plot to draw America into the war? Yes, the second half is much better than the first half. I liked the book deserves four stars for the latter half. I liked the book but I don't. The tempo is slow, exaggeratedly slow. Why does Brick do this? To

increase suspense, to keep the listener hanging. This is not to my taste, but you may love it.2015-read audible-us bad-trip September 16, 2020Erik Larson offers up another of his dazzling pieces of nonfiction, taking the reader into the middle of an infamous event and hashing out some of the details that make it come alive. Larson's attention to

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detail and desire to share the nuances of the events that led to the Lusitania's sinking makes this a must-read book for all who have a passion for history of the time. The Lusitania was a well-known British passenger ship that had made the voyage across the Atlantic on numerous occasions. As Larson discusses in the early chapters, the Cunard Line
held this ship in the highest esteem and advertised its prowess on the open waters. Countless people of importance had spent time in their berths and it was set to sail yet again, crossing from New York to Liverpool. After Europe went to war in the
open waters, particularly when the German U-Boats emerged as a credible threat. Larson discusses the loose gentlement that any ship (passenger or freight) that identified itself as part of a neutral country should be safe from attack. Even still, the Imperial German Embassy put out advertisements about how they could not guarantee safe
passage, trying to protect passengers from risking their lives. Larson points out that this warning was placed directly under an advertisement for the Lusitania's return voyage from New York, which some felt was ominous. All the while, US President Woodrow Wilson was firmly keeping America out of the European war, in hopes that it would end
 quickly and he could get back to dealing with his allies on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. When the day came for the Lusitania to sail again, May 1, 1915, a large contingent had purchased tickets for the voyage. It would seem that the veiled threat brought about by the Germans could not deter the most dedicated travellers. Additionally, the
haunting of the Titanic's fate three years before did not stymie plans for many, though Larson does explain how these events did stir up some concern amongst the crew about this ship, including Captain William Thomas Turner. Larson not only lists some of the star-studded passengers, but also the lavish details of what they could expect onboard
Still, Cunard Line sought to impress their guests as much as possible with foods, accommodations, and a great deal of entertainment on board. While the Lusitania inched its way across the Atlantic, U-20, one of the deadly German submarines was trolling off the Irish Coast. Its commanding officer, Walther Schwieger was ruthless in his desire to cause
as much havoc as possible. As Larson mentions, Schwieger took pleasure in sinking enemy vessels whenever and wherever possible. No ship was safe with the German U-boats out on the open waters, particularly when they could remain hidden within the fog and placid surface of the water. What was Wilson doing at this time, while war raged in
Europe and the Germans were taking down ships? Why he was trying to get over the loss of his wife by wooing another woman, one Edith Bolling. Larson offers an interesting sub-plot of this most curious courting while danger slid through the waves and created an ominous veil. By May 7th, the Lusitania had the Irish Coast in its sights, a happy even
for the captain and many on board. The ship was almost done crossing and there had been nothing about which to worry. It was then that Schwieger prepared to strike. While the Lusitania had received numerous warnings across the wires about other ships being targeted, they forged onward, into U-20s sightlines. As Larson vividly
describes, Schwieger took aim and shot a torpedo at the ship, striking it with enough force to cause immediate panic on board, as passengers and crew rushed to see what had happened and sought to commence evacuation. With life jackets dispensed and rafts used to ferry people to safety, the crew sized up
what had happened, some choosing to downplay the damage. Reports on shore were somewhat misleading as many waited for additional information. People rushed to leave, though the damage was extensive, leaving the waters peppered with bodies, both the living and the dead. Larson offers intense details of matters at this point, putting the reader
in the middle of events, as lives hung in the balance. At final count, 1198 lives were lost and the German U-20 slunk away, happy with its cataclysmic attack. Reactions on both sides of the Atlantic were slow, though respect to the first while. Wilson was furious, though this was not the event that pushed America into the war, though it
surely played a contributing factor. The closing part of the book alone is riveting, as Larson describes the chaos and aftermath, enough to send chills down the spine of the bravest reader. Larson proves that he is masterful in his writing and depiction of the events of May 1915. Highly recommended to those who love vivid storytelling that brings and depiction of the events of May 1915.
history to life, as well as the reader who seeks to better understand how this tragedy came about. There is no doubt that the events leading up to the sinking of the Lusitania are filled with foreshadowing. Hindsight is sure to bring the skeptics out, though one cannot fault those who were sure safe passage would be promised to a passenger ship
 Larson delivers a masterful narrative that layers all sides of the story together, offering insights extracted from his deep research. There is no doubt that the reality of this event is shown a new level of intensity through Erik Larson's words, leaving the reader to feel as though they, too, were aboard the ship. Larson's style presents things almost as
though it were a piece of fiction, the vividness exceeding expectation with each turn of the page. Divided into five key parts, Larson delineates how things progressed and at what point the Lusitania slid into the almost 'on the fly' plan of U-20 and Commanding Officer Walther Schwieger. While it may seem macabre to admit this, but the detail of death
and destruction were perhaps the best portions of the book, bringing home the sizeable losses suffered on that day, which helped to vilify the act all the more. Perhaps one of the best-told pieces of historical storytelling I have read, right up there with the other Erik Larson book I completed recently. Stunning seems too bland a word for me to use in
this case. Kudos, Mr. Larson, for yet another winner. I cannot wait to get my hands on more of your work, as you breathe life into the past's tales. Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at: Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: 5, 2023Terrorism 1915 It's one thing, as a U-boat captain, to fire a torpedo at
an enemy warship. It's quite another to target a passenger ship that has no guns, no military on board, no protection, and no means of defense, fire a torpedo, kill children and infants, kill pregnant women, watch them drown and die, call it a heroic act of war ... then celebrate it as such, message the news to your home country, and apparently give
them a good reason to accelerate the celebration, and dance in the streets. This book is not about an act of war. It's about terrorism, Great War style. Captain von Trapp played by Christopher Plummer in The Sound of Music. (You'll recall he was a naval officer.) After torpedoing a ship in WW1, he
remarked that this type of war of stealth against defenseless ships amounted to nothing more or less than cowardice and murder. [and yes all sides utilized submarine warfare] U-20's captain, Schweiger, according to his wife and mother, was greatly distressed at his sinking of the Lusitania. So distressed he carried on sinking all kinds of shipping, not
just warships, until he and his crew were killed in his U-boat in 1917. A lot of blame lies with the Royal Navy for failure to protect the Lusitania when they knew it was in harm's way or to give it important intel that would have changed the outcome. Blame also lies with Winston Churchill, who is beneath contempt for blaming the Lusitania's captain
over and over again, when he knew very well it was the Navy that had failed that passenger ship, including Churchill, not its stalwart captain. America should have swallowed the whiskey and declared war over the Lusitania. Waiting two more years did not save lives but cost lives, including American lives. A great deal of terror was to come in the
years and decades ahead. In WW2, which some scholars claim was no more than an appendage of WW1, civilians were deliberately targeted and destroyed in the Blitz, the bombing of Dresden, the Rape of Nanking, and the slaughterhouse of Ukraine and western Russia. I was astonished to find a religious acquaintance honoring Franco the other day
 Franco, who had his own citizens, not soldiers, firebombed by German aircraft at Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. I see no honor or heroism in U-boat crews that massacred passenger ships so I offer none. The book is well-written and important. It is a disaster epic like the Titanic epic. The difference is that, apart from the hubris and errors
people made, the Titanic's killer, and the killer of its passengers and crew, was an iceberg that possessed both. And still acted. August 13, 2017This is a fascinating book about the sinking of the Lusitania, the British ocean liner that was torpedoed by a German
submarine in May 1915. Nearly 1,200 people died, including 128 Americans. I didn't know much about the Lusitania before I read this book, but I should have because it was one of the critical events that pushed Americans. I didn't know much about the Lusitania before I read this book, but I should have because it was one of the critical events that pushed Americans. I didn't know much about the Lusitania before I read this book, but I should have because it was one of the critical events that pushed Americans.
sense of what was happening in the war, and we understand why the attack on a civilian passenger ship was so shocking. There is also an interesting discussion on the role of the submarine, which was a relatively new kind of boat. Additionally, Larson gets into the historical What Ifs. What if the Lusitania hadn't been delayed when it launched? What
if the British had sent a destroyer to escort the ship through waters that were known to contain German U-boats? What if the torpedo had failed, which was a common problem? And most importantly, what if British officials deliberately let the Lusitania be vulnerable to attack, in the hopes it would push America
into the war? The first half of this book sets up the events that conspired to put the Lusitania in harm's way, and the second half is a tick-tock of the day of the attack. We see things from the perspective of both the U-boat crew and from the British captain, and Larson also writes about what the Lusitania passengers were doing at the time. While
reading, I was struck by the amount of research Larson compiled here in an almost effortless fashion. His narrative is strong and compelling. My only quibble with this book is Larson spends too much time on U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's love life; his wife had died in 1914, and he eventually falls in love and marries another woman. Some of the amount of research Larson spends too much time on U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's love life; his wife had died in 1914, and he eventually falls in love and marries another woman.
Wilson scenes went on too long and made me anxious to get back to the Lusitania story. But overall, I enjoyed learning more about the Lusitania, and this book fit nicely into my ongoing reading about World War I. Highly recommended for history readers. audiobooks history nonfiction November 5, 2015 Informative: My first Erik Larson novel turned
out to be quite the educational experience beginning with the significance of the title DEAD WAKE.....the disturbance (or track) a torpedo leaves behind on the water in route to its destination....and, I also now know that of the Lusitania's 1,959 passengers and crew on board May 7, 1915, (nearly 100 years ago) only 764 survived...600 were never 
found and 123 American's were among the dead. (three German stowaways also perished)Interesting: Larson's work of non-fiction captures the day-to-day activities of various passengers as well as the Lusitania's competent and brave Captain William Thomas Turner and the aggressive, villaneous German predator of the U-20 submarine, Captain
Walther Schwieger who repeatedly targeted innocent passenger liners and merchant ships to destruction. Maddening: As you will see, there were many variables that could have changed history and averted this horrific disaster..... departure delays....fog....orders for reduction in speed....lack of a naval escort thru known dangerous waters....the
recalled rescue ship so close at hand, and....worst of all, the Room 40 cover-ups that could have saved so many lives. I found it maddening that Captain Turner ended up being the scapegoat when obviously the British Admiralty held a greater degree of fault. I was also left with a rather disappointing opinion of President Wilson for waiting two long
years to take evasive action against Germany even after numerous ships were attacked with American lives lost. While an extremely enlightening and educational read in many respects, I did not feel much of a connection to the characters or the distress and panic of the moment.... there was almost a calmness in the telling. Anyway, still a GREAT
 historical read that I would highly recommend! 4.5 Starsbuddy-read-jean non-fiction read-2015 February 7, 2017Wrenching and riveting. I'm a big fan of Erik Larson, and he is seriously on top of his game with "Dead Wake." His analysis of all the elements that had to conspire for the ship to sink is at once poignant and smart. February 24, 2015The
Hook - Many years ago I read A Night to Remember by Walter Lord about the tragic sinking of the unsinkable Titanic. After this I'm certain I read a book about the Lusitania though for the life of me I can't remember if it was fiction or not. When I heard that one of my favorite authors, Eric Larson was going to cover this subject in Dead Wake: The
Last Crossing of the Lusitania I was in. My sincere thanks to the publisher, Crown, for trusting me with an e-galley of the pre-published work. The Line - One passenger, Dorothy Conner, bored with the monotony of ship life made this remark during a meal in the first-class dining room. "I can't help hoping that we get some sort of thrill going up the
Channel."This seems an awful example of "be careful what you wish for". The Sinker - There is so much detail in Dead Wake that it was hard to decide what to cover in this review. I found myself underlining passage after passag
some things about the ill-fated Lusitania but learned a great deal more in my reading of Dead Wake. His style is smooth, thoughts and ideas easily flowing from page to page, never boring me. The Lusitania, like the Titanic, was unsinkable and yet it did. Larson gives us just enough explanation of the ship and events that led to this incident that by
book's end I could hold my own in a conversation on the subject. I never felt I was being taught a history lesson. He sets the scene well in the opening pages with descriptions of the voyage. He often quotes references to its distinctive four tunnels
that would allow no mistaking it with other ships. "From the first the ship became an object of national pride and affection. In keeping with Cunard's custom of naming its ships for ancient lands, the company selected Lusitania, after a Roman province on the Iberian peninsulas that occupied roughly the same ground as modern-day Portugal. "The
inhabitants were war-like, and the Romans conquered them with great difficulty," states a memorandum in Cunard's files on the naming of the ship. "They lived generally upon plunder and were rude and unpolished about the ship itself
As the Lusitania departed Liverpool on its first transatlantic run in 1907, some one hundred-thousand spectators gathered at various points along the Mersey (pronounced Merzey) River to watch, many singing "Rule Britannia!" and waving handkerchiefs. Passenger C.R. Minnitt, in a letter he wrote aboard ship, told his wife how he climbed to the
highest deck and stood near one of the ship's four towering funnels to best capture the moment. "You do not get any idea of her size till you get right on top and then it is like being on Lincoln Cathedral," Minnitt wrote. "I went over parts of the 1st class and it is really impossible to describe, it is so beautiful.""You could see the shape of the four
funnels," said the captain Thomas M. Taylor; "she was the only ship with four funnels." From those first pages of this 1917 sailing of a grand ship to the very last of the actual torpedo that tragically hit its mark leaving 1,195 dead and 764 surviving, this is narrative non-fiction at its best. A minor criticism is that I wish Larson had included a list of
websites separate from their inclusion in his notes. adreniline-adventure lifetime-favorites non-fictionJuly 7, 2016Everybody loved this but me! I'm flashing back to The Martian. I found this extremely boring and painful. A tragic story and very well-researched, but this one did what no other book before it has done...it actually put me to sleep. I fell
asleep while reading. Enough said. Zzzzzz. 2 stars. September 11, 2017Book 1 for 2016. Erik Larson strikes again only this time with the speed and grace of a scythe. Tackling a not that well-known maritime incident, he takes us right into the cauldron of this major event of both United States and World History albeit looking at it from a myriad of
different viewpoints in a sort of Rashomon-type retelling of the sinking of the Lusitania, the impetus for America's belated entry into the Great War. Taking place just three years after that other "night to remember" when yet another great liner sunk quickly below the waves, our story begins in the last days of April, 1915 at the outset of what would
turn out to be the 201st (and final) transatlantic crossing of the Cunard liner Lusitania. Setting the scene of actual world events as the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor, Larson delves deep into the complex back stories of not only the ship leaves New York harbor.
the torpedo that inflicted the fatal blow to the ship itself. Various passengers aboard the Lusitania are described (some at great lengths) and even the relationships of world leaders such as a very young Winston Churchill and United States President Woodrow Wilson are studied in depth as to their roles within the greater story itself. At times
somewhat disjointed, the story itself is told at a brisk enough pace to keep the reader interested and the pages turning at a fast clip. Most chapters are three to four pages in length. Unlike the Titanic disaster, with the Lusitania my interest was never quite piqued enough to actually care/have feelings for the passengers and crew of the ship. Thus my
reason for not a full five star rating. I went away certainly feeling bad for what they had to go through, but my heartstrings were not as pulled as much as when certain EdwardIan era individuals suddenly find themselves adjusting to the fact that life itself may be over and they may very well find themselves trying to stay both alive and afloat in the
frigid waters of the North Atlantic. Here the time from impact to sinking was a mere eighteen minutes. The Titanic's death rattles went on for a little over two hours. However, I found the exposition on the lead up and background to World War One and the detailed description of the German submarine leadership and it's role/part in the war
absolutely fascinating. In conclusion, I strongly believe that this will be the definitive one on this tragedy for years to come. Very well done Mr. Larson.ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 2015.disasters voyages wilson November 18, 2020Διαβάζεται ευχάριστα, έχει ένταση και ρυθμό. Η έρευνα φαίνεται εμπεριστατωμένη και προσφέρε
το γενικό πλαίσιο, χωρίς να πλατειάζει αχρείαστα. Ταυτόχρονα, η κάμερα εστιάζει στα επιμέρους ατομικά πεπρωμένα, στις ιστορίες των επιβατών του Λουζιτάνια, αλλά και σε εκείνες του υποβρυχίου που το βύθισε. Η βαθμολογία μου θα ήταν μεγαλύτερη αν δεν είχα συνεχώς την αίσθηση ότι ο συγγραφέας σε πολλά σημεία έγραφε ως
σεναριογράφος, με απώτερο στόχο την κινηματογραφική μεταφορά του βιβλίου: υπάρχουν έτοιμες σεκάνς, ιδίως προς το τέλος όπου η ένταση κορυφώνεται (συνεχείς εναλλαγές σε πρόσωπα, κοντινά πλάνα, γρήγορο μοντάζ). Τώρα θα αναρωτηθεί κάποιος γιατί να είναι κακό αυτό. Δεν έχω και καμιά εντυπωσιακή απάντηση να δώσω, πλην εκείνης
που αναμένεται από έναν ιδιότροπο αναγνώστη. January 30, 2016"Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania and figures that for me, only live in history books. I didn't remember
who was president when America entered WW1, but this book brought Woodrow Wilson to life. As it did Winston Churchill. But most vivid was the ship's Commander, William Thomas Turner. And many of the passengers. The endless cast of characters made it a little difficult for me in the beginning as I was trying to get them all straight. I was a third
of the way into the book before I felt fully committed to the story. Once committed however, I began to be riveted by what I knew was going to happen.July 22, 2018H ιστορία του Βάλτερ Σβίγκερ το Μάιο του 1915, τρία χρόνια μετά το ναυάγιο του
Τιτανικού. Σε μια περίοδο που - παρά την επίσημη ανακοίνωση-προειδοποίηση που εξέδωσε ο ίδιος ο Κάιζερ - κανείς δεν πίστευε ότι η Γερμανικά υποβρύχια που περιπολούν στην εμπόλεμη ζώνη αρχίζουν να τορπιλίζουν πλοία αδιακρίτως και χωρίς προειδοποίηση για
την ασφαλή απομάκρυνση των πολιτών. Οι κανόνες του παιχνιδιού έχουν αλλάξει ανεπιστρεπτί - μόνο που αυτό δεν έχει γίνει ακόμα αντιληπτό από τους Συμμάχους και τα ουδέτερα κράτη.Στις 30 Απριλίου αποπλέει από τη Νέα Υόρκη το Λουζιτάνια, στολίδι του αγγλικού ναυτικού εμπορικού στόλου, με κατεύθυνση το Λίβερπουλ. Κατά την
αναχώρηση, οι επιβάτες είναι χαρούμενοι και ήσυχοι. Τίποτα δε θα συμβεί, με την είσοδο του Λουζιτάνια στην εμπόλεμη ζώνη θα συνοδευτεί από το πολεμικό Ναυτικό και θα προσεγγίσει το λιμάνι με ασφάλεια. Άλλωστε αυτό είναι το πιο γρήγορο ατμόπλοιο της εποχής του, πολύ πιο γρήγορο από τα ούτως ή άλλως βραδυκίνητα γερμανικά
υποβρύχια. Αποκλείεται να το προλάβει ένα υποβρύχιο ακόμη και εάν το εντοπίσει. Στο πλοίο επιβαίνουν περίπου 2.000 άτομα, συμπεριλαμβανομένου ενός ασυνήθιστα μεγάλου αριθμού παιδιών και βρεφών. 123 από τους επιβαίνοντες είναι Αμερικανοί πολίτες.Μια σειρά από γεγονότα συγκλίνουν την πορεία του Λουζιτάνια με αυτή του γερμανικού
υποβρυχίου και οδηγούν στη βύθιση του πρώτου από το δεύτερο. Ο Λάρσον ερευνά και ασχολείται με όλα τα καίρια ζητήματα: πώς βυθίστηκε το μεγαλύτερο και ταχύτερο εμπορικό πλοίο της εποχής του; Γιατί κανείς δεν ενημέρωσε τον πλοίαρχο Τέρνερ ότι μετά τον απόπλου του Λουζιτάνια είχαν τορπιλιστεί ήδη άλλα δύο επιβατηγά πλοία και γιατί
δεν του δόθηκαν οδηγίες για να αλλάξει την πορεία του πλοίου; Ήταν όλα μια άτυχη στιγμή, μια σειρά κακών χειρισμών ή μια τραγωδία που εσκεμμένα δεν αποφεύχθηκε με απώτατο στόχο την εμπλοκή των ΗΠΑ στον πόλεμο; Ένα πολύ ωραίο βιβλίο. Ο συγγραφέας πιάνει το νήμα των γεγονότων που συνδέονται με το ταξίδι του Λουζιτάνια καθώς
και την πορεία του U-20 πριν και κατά τη διάρκεια της βύθισης του πλοίου από τις μαρτυρίες και τα στοιχεία που έχουν δημοσιευθεί και περιγράφει καρέ-καρέ τις σκηνές ενός πραγματικού δράματος, μιας αληθινής τραγωδίας. Μιας τραγωδίας που συνέβη ακριβώς γιατί όλα έγιναν ακριβώς έτσι όπως έγιναν και αν έστω και ένα μικρό γεγονός είχε
αλλάξει, ίσως το πλοίο να είχε τελικά προσαράξει στο Λίβερπουλ. January 10, 2016So, I listened to Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the descriptions by Eric Larson are really that good. He's got the gift of transporting his readers.
Man, I wanted to stop that torpedo. I missed it by 100 years. No one can accuse Larson of not researching his projects. This true story was filled with facts and dialogue, from the Lusitania and its patrons, to the progress of WWI and the main players involved. I'd call it a very good book for those interested in the War itself, or the luxury Atlantic liners
of that period. 1,191 lives were lost in the sinking of the Lusitania, and although under very different circumstances, it can't help but remind me of the Lusitania crossing paths with that German submarine and that particular day and time, let alone being struck, was
definitely the needle in the haystack. I learned a lot about the events surrounding the story of the Lusitania. Some people are going to kick me in the shin, but I would have been happier with some things removed. There is much included about Woodrow Wilson, other semi-pertinent things before and after the war, and many details of the passengers
themselves that could have been left out. Scott Brick is an excellent audio narrator, but don't listen if you're feeling drowsy...unless a nap is what you were looking for. :) August 26, 2021This is a really intense book that I gobbled up quickly. It alternates between the perspective of the Lusitania passengers and crew and the German submarine
occupants. The story of the Lusitania starts a couple days before it's departure from New York, and you will learn the backstories of some of the passengers and crew. The story of the German submarine (it was really gross). The book also
provides a crash course on various boats and warships that I thought was interesting and useful. The tension builds as the two crafts wind through their paths. As with all good history books, you get an appreciation for the mistakes and weird random events that happened. Events that could have quite easily happened differently; and if they did, would
have had profound impacts. For instance, Britain knew that the Lusitania was entering a danger zone and could have told the Captain to alter its path to a safer route. But they didn't. The story of the aftermath of the Lusitania sinking was also interesting, though this was a pretty small part of the book. I wasn't aware that the US did not declare war
until 2 years after the sinking of the Lusitania, so it wasn't as much of a proximate cause for US involvement as I thought. March 24, 2016 Years ago I read his book "Naked Consumer, How Our Private Lives Become Public Commodities," so I knew this would be good. And it was! Any author who pours so much of his life into research, and then
weaves it into a tale that keeps you wanting to read just one more page, time and again, is a darn good author. After reading it I have to wonder, was it a set up to try to get the US into the war, or just a comedy of errors, with some bad luck thrown in? history military-history politics Displaying 1 - 30 of 14,143 reviewsGet help and learn more about
the design. From the #1 New York Times bestselling author and master of narrative nonfiction comes the enthralling story of the sinking of the LusitaniaOn May 1, 1915, 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 anxious. Germany had declared the seas around Britain to be a war zone, and for months, its U-boats had brought terror to the North Atlantic. But the Lusitania was one of the era's great transatlantic "Greyhounds" 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. He knew, moreover, that his ship - the fastest then in service - could outrun any threat. 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, mystery, and real-life suspense, Dead Wake brings to life a cast of evocative characters, from famed Boston bookseller Charles Lauriat to pioneering female architect Theodate Pope Riddle to President 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 that helped place America on the road to war.
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