WORLD WAR 1 – THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA

By Aoife Carroll

My Great Great Great Uncle, Joseph Rafferty, was a son of my Great Great Great Grandparents, Patrick and Rose Rafferty. He was born in Cooley, Lower Willville, Carlingford, County Louth. At the age of 19 he was boarding with the Dullaghan family in Liverpool and was working as a dock labourer. At age 23 Joseph was working as a fireman on board The Lusitania.

The Lusitania was a British luxury cruise ship. It mostly travelled across the Atlantic Ocean between Britain and the US carrying passengers and cargo. It was 787 feet long and could carry 3048 passengers and crew.

On the 1st May 1915 The Lusitania departed from New York on it's way to Liverpool. There were adverts in US papers from the German Embassy warning people that the ship may be attacked when entering British waters. People didn't believe that the Germans would attack a luxury ship with 1959 people on board including many children.

On the 7th May 1915 as The Lusitania approached the coastline of Ireland, the Germans attacked and fired a torpedo. The torpedo made a direct hit on the side of the ship causing an explosion. Within a few minutes the Captain gave the order to abandon ship. It took 18 minutes for The Lusitania to sink. Only 761 people survived. 1198 were killed.

The killing of so many innocent people by the Germans caused outrage across the world. Support for the Allies against Germany grew including the US who later joined the Allies in war against Germany.

Propaganda using the phrase "Remember The Lusitania" was used as a battle cry to recruit new soldiers.

My Great Great Great Uncle, Joseph Rafferty, was lost to the sea. He is commemorated at Tower Hill War Memorial in London.

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND TO THE HONOUR OF TWELVE THOUSAND OF THE MERCHANT NAVY AND FISHING FLEETS WHO HAVE NO GRAVE BUT THE SEA.

IRISHMEN
AVENGE THE LUSITANIA
JOIN AN IRISH REGIMENT TO-DAY.

COLD-BLOODED MURDER!
REMEMBER
GERMANY'S CROWNING INFAMY
THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA,
WITH HUNDREDS OF WOMEN & CHILDREN

Germans have wantonly sacked Cities and Holy Places.

Germans have murdered thousands of innocent Civilians.

Germans have flung vitriol and blazing petrol on the Allied Troops.

Germans have killed our Fisherfolk and deserted the drowning.

Germans have inflicted unspeakable torture by poison gases on our brave Troops at Ypres.

Germans have poisoned wells in South Africa.

Germans have ill-treated British Prisoners.

Germans have assassinated our Wounded.

THESE CRIMES AGAINST GOD AND MAN
ARE COMMITTED TO TRY AND MAKE YOU
AFRAID OF THESE GERMAN BARBARIANS

The place to give your answer is
THE NEAREST RECRUITING OFFICE

ENLIST TO-DAY

REMEMBER THE 'LUSITANIA'

THE JURY'S VERDICT SAYS:

"We find that the said deceased died from their prolonged immersion and exhaustion in the sea eight miles south-south-west of the Old Head of Kinsale on Friday, May 7th, 1915, owing to the sinking of the R.M.S. 'Lusitania' by a torpedo fired without warning from a German submarine."

"That this appalling crime was contrary to international law and the conventions of all civilized nations, and we therefore charge the officers of the said submarine and the Emperor and Government of Germany, under whose orders they acted, with the crime of wilful and wholesale murder before the tribunal of the civilized world."

IT IS YOUR DUTY
TO TAKE UP THE SWORD OF JUSTICE
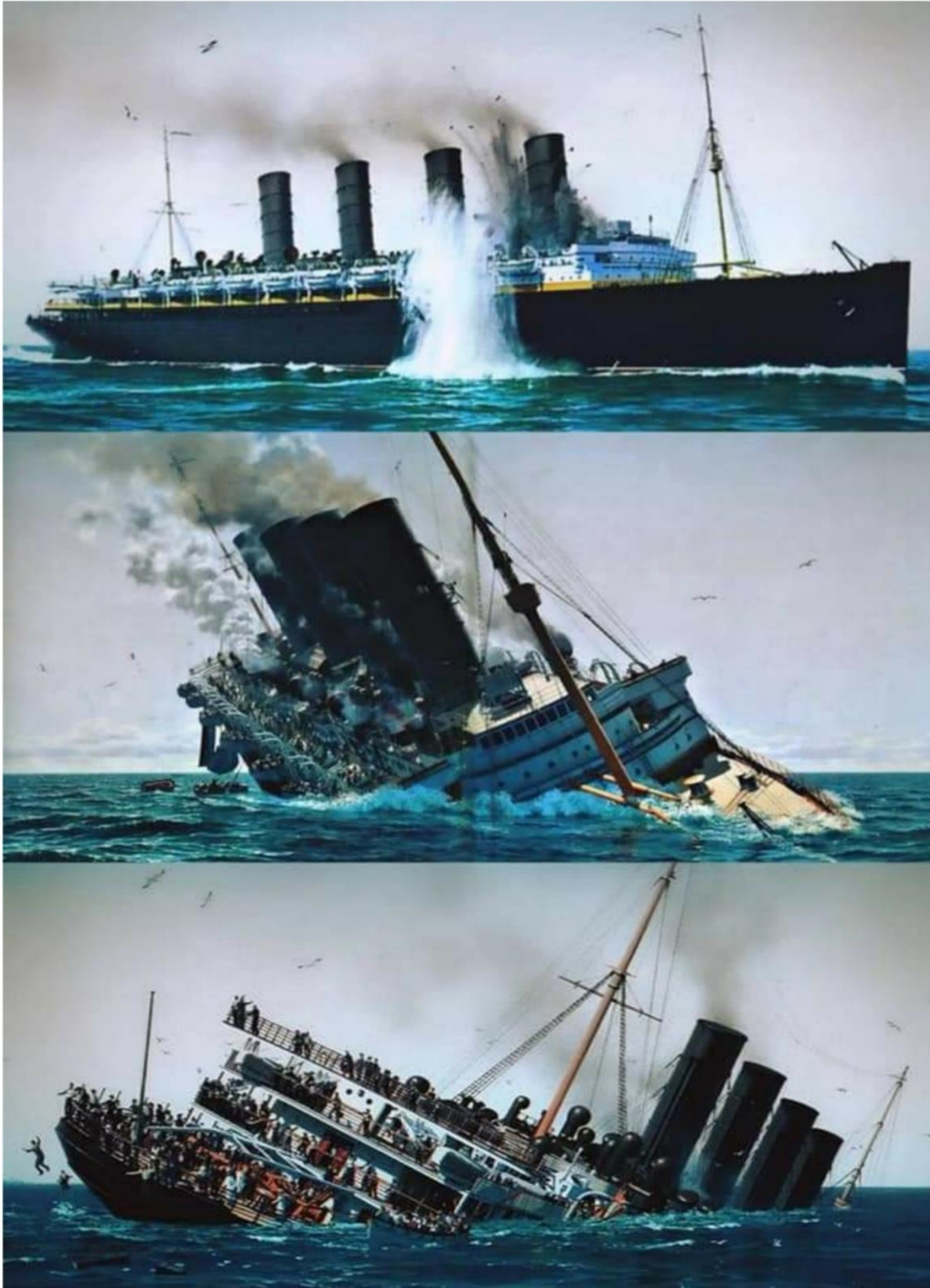TO AVENGE THIS DEVIL'S WORK

ENLIST TO-DAY

MEN OF LEICESTERSHIRE
AVENGE THE LUSITANIA
HOW TO DO IT!
For every Man, Woman and Child lost 10 Men should join.

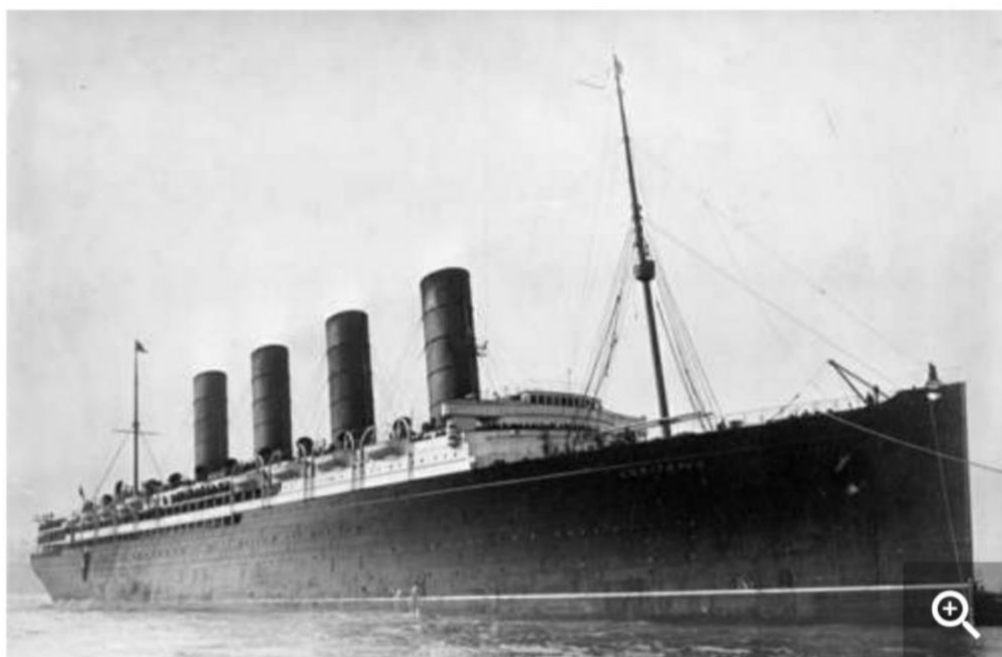JOIN THE 10TH BATTALION
LEICESTERSHIRE REGIMENT
21, HUMBERSTONE GATE.

14 DAYS LEAVE AT HOME ON JOINING
PAY AND ALLOWANCES 3/- PER DAY WHILST ON LEAVE.

WW1 Lost At Sea 1915

Lusitania, British ocean liner, the sinking of which by a German U-boat on May 7, 1915, contributed indirectly to the entry of the United States into World War I.
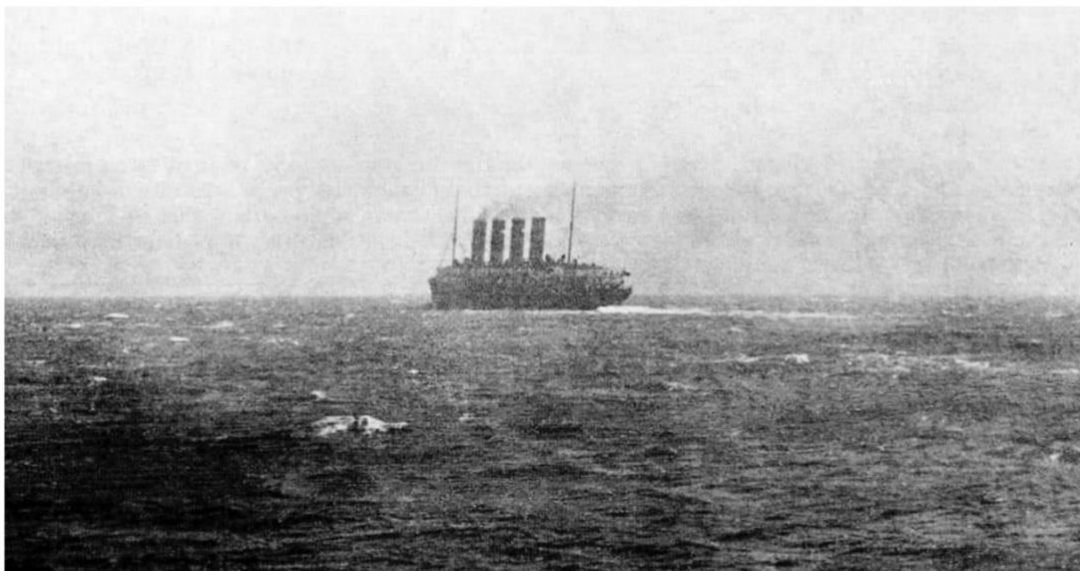

Lusitania
British ocean liner *Lusitania*.
George Grantham Bain Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (digital file no. 3g13287u)

Departing New York

Last Photograph Taken

First Class Lounge
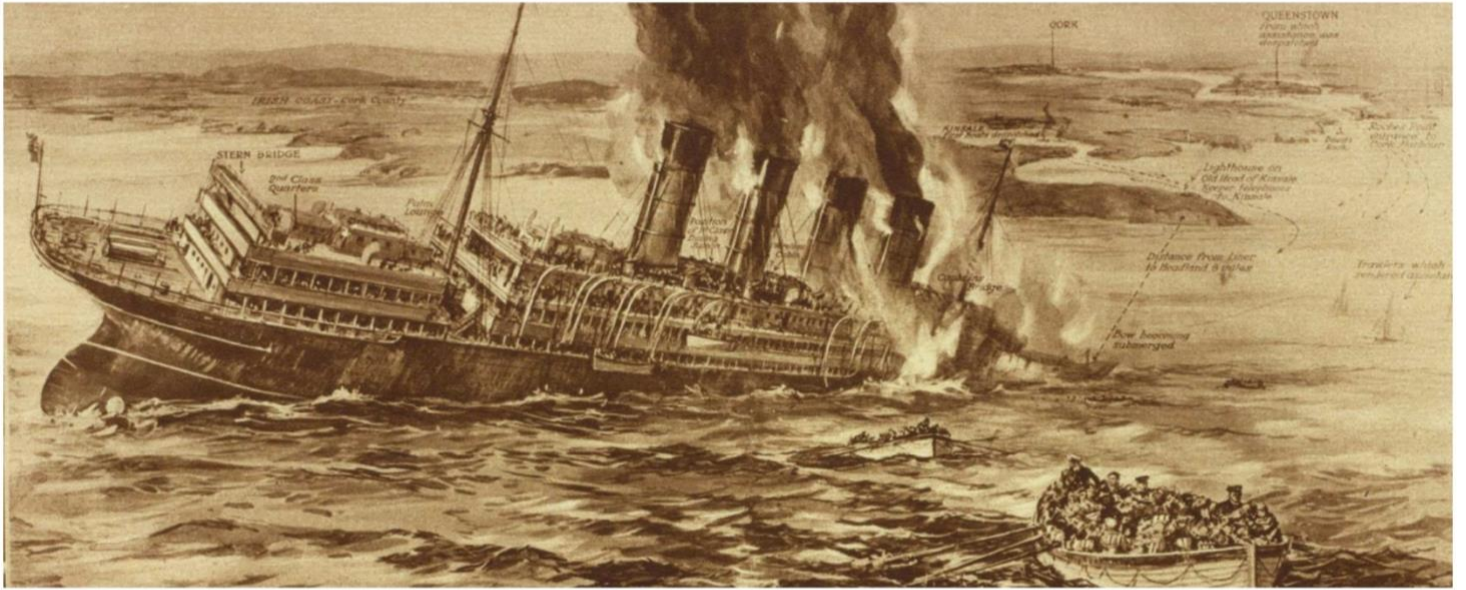

First Class Lounge. R. M. S. LUSITANIA.

Third Class Dining

7th May 1915

My Great Great Great Uncle Joseph Rafferty

RAFFERTY, Frmn. Joseph. S.S. " Lusitania " (Liverpool). Drowned, as a result of an attack by an enemy submarine, 7th May, 1915. Age 23. Son of Patrick and Rose Rafferty, of Lower Willville, Carlingford, Co. Louth. Born at Whitestown.

Lusitania Crew List

Selected RMS *Lusitania* crew members have individual biographies.

Crossing 202

1 May 1915, New York to Liverpool

Deck Crew

69 RMS *Lusitania* deck crew members, 37 survived, 32 died.

Victualling Crew

306 RMS *Lusitania* victualling crew members, 139 survived, 167 died.

Engineering Crew

313 RMS *Lusitania* engineering crew members, 112 survived, 201 died.

Band

5 RMS *Lusitania* band members, 3 survived, 2 died.

Tower Hill Memorial

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Mercantile Marine Memorial

The Merchant Seamen's Memorial

First World War

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND TO THE HONOUR
OF TWELVE THOUSAND OF THE MERCHANT
NAVY AND FISHING FLEETS WHO HAVE NO
GRAVE BUT THE SEA

The **Tower Hill Memorial** is a pair of Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorials in Trinity Square, on Tower Hill in London, England. The memorials, one for the First World War and one for the Second, commemorate civilian merchant sailors and fishermen who were killed as a result of enemy action and have no known grave. The first, the **Mercantile Marine War Memorial**, was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and unveiled in 1928; the second, the **Merchant Seamen's Memorial**, was designed by Sir Edward Maufe and unveiled in 1955. A third memorial, commemorating merchant sailors who were killed in the 1982 Falklands War, was added to the site in 2005.

COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES

FIREMAN
JOSEPH RAFFERTY

🏴 **Regiment & Unit/Ship**

Mercantile Marine

S.S. "Lusitania" (Liverpool)

📖 **Date of Death**

Died 07 May 1915

Age 23 years old

🛡 **Buried or commemorated at**

TOWER HILL MEMORIAL

United Kingdom

Country of Service

United Kingdom

Additional Info

Son of Patrick and Rose Rafferty, of Lower Willville, Carlingford, Co. Louth. Born at Whitestown.

LUSITANIA

PRICE C.
PROWSE T. E. U.
QUARRIE W. S.
QUINE G.
QUINN T. L.
QUIRK W. E.
RAFFERTY J.
RATCLIFFE P.
REID A.
REID J.
RICE M.

RICHARDSON A.
RIGBY G.
RITSON J.
ROACH J.
ROBERTS A. J.
ROBERTS J.
ROGAN J.
RONNAN G.
ROSS H.
ROWE J.
RUFFELS W. S.
RYAN E.
SERVED AS RICE E.

In Memory Of

Fireman

JOSEPH RAFFERTY

S.S. "Lusitania" (Liverpool), Mercantile Marine who died on 07 May 1915 Age 23

Son of Patrick and Rose Rafferty, of Lower Willville, Carlingford, Co. Louth. Born at Whitestown.

Remembered with Honour

TOWER HILL MEMORIAL

||||||
COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
||||||

**COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION**

Sinking of the *Lusitania* May 7, 1915 2:10 PM

The RMS *Lusitania* was a British ocean liner owned by the Cunard Line. It was built to compete for the highly lucrative transatlantic passenger trade. On May 7, 1915, it was sunk by a German U-boat. The sinking solidified U.S. public opinion against Germany and indirectly contributed to the entry of the United States into World War I.
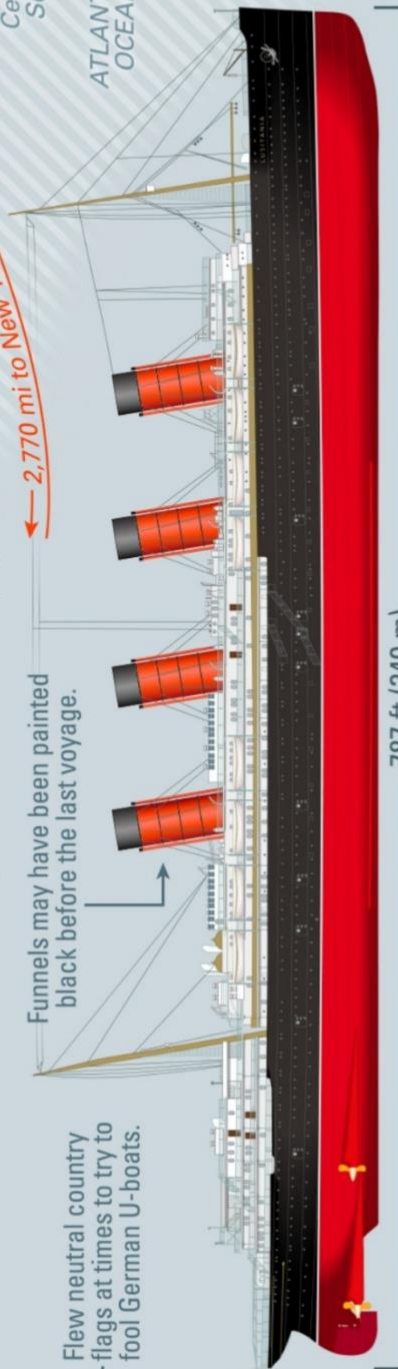
TIMELINE

- June 7, 1906 – Launched.
- August 26, 1907 – Delivered to Cunard as the largest ship in the world, with a gross tonnage of 31,550.
- September 7-13, 1907 – Sailed on its maiden voyage from Liverpool, England, to New York City.
- October 1907 – Won the Blue Riband for the fastest Atlantic crossing, averaging about 24 knots.
- May 7, 1915 – Torpedoed and sunk by the German U-boat SM U-20. A secondary explosion occurred almost immediately after the torpedo hit, ripping the ship in two.

German-declared war zone, February 1915. All enemy ships in this area would be sunk.

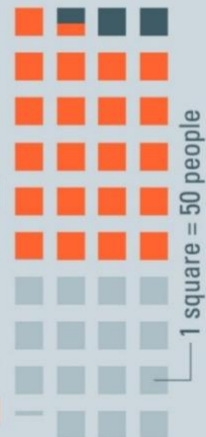Flew neutral country flags at times to try to fool German U-boats.

Funnels may have been painted black before the last voyage.

787 ft (240 m)

projected route

UNITED KINGDOM

Liverpool

ENGLAND

WALES

Cardigan Bay

Bristol Channel

Irish Sea

Dublin

IRELAND

Wicklow

Wexford

Waterford

Queenstown (Cobh)

Cork

Kinsale

St. George's Channel

270 mi to Liverpool

2,770 mi to New York

Celtic Sea

ATLANTIC OCEAN

0   40   80 mi
0   60   120 km

CASUALTIES

Of the 1,959 passengers on board,
■ 1,198 drowned, ■ 128 U.S. dead.

□ 1 square = 50 people

FACTS & FIGURES

sank in just 18 min

300 ft (91 m) depth of water

101 round-trips in the 7 years and 9 months of its career

173 TONS of rifle ammunition and shells on board

GERMAN SM U-20 SUBMARINE

- Launched on December 18, 1912.
- Grounded on November 14, 1916, on Danish coast and destroyed by crew.

37 SHIPS SUNK

210.6 ft (64.2 m)

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