



MERCHANT NAVY COMMEMORATIVE THEME PROJECT (MNCTP)

NEWS RELEASE



TODAY WE REMEMBER THE
SINKING OF THE RMS LUSITANIA

MAY 7, 2021

Ottawa, Today –

Mr. Stéphane Ouellette,
President and Chief
Executive Officer, Merchant
Navy Commemorative
Theme Project (MNCTP),
remembered the Sinking of
The RMS Lusitania.

On May 7, 1915, *The RMS Lusitania* was approaching the coast of Ireland, six days after leaving New York to Liverpool, and was spotted by the German U-boat 'U-20.' The German submarine moved rapidly into position, and fired a torpedo into the hull of the Cunard ocean luxury passenger liner. This resulted in a huge explosion that was felt throughout the ship, and it only took eighteen minutes for the *Lusitania* to sink. Of the 1,959 souls on board, 1,198 perished, including 128 Americans. Only 761 survived.

The tragic sinking of *The RMS Lusitania* was a very significant event in the First World War. The death of so many innocent civilians, suffering at the hands of The Imperial German Navy, galvanized American support for entering the war. However, the capturing and sinking of the first American Merchant vessel, the Liberty Ship, S.S. *William P. Frye* (January 27, 1915), followed by the German Empire announcing a return to submarine warfare (February 1917), and the sinking of many ships with Americans on board, are what prompted Congress to declare war on April 2, 1917. A copy of the News Release: *Sailing Ship William P. Frye, First American Merchant Vessel Captured and Sunk in WWI by the Imperial German Navy*, has been attached for reference.



Quote

“The poor babies who perished in the ocean struck a blow at German power more deadly than could have been achieved by the sacrifice of 100,000 men.”

– Sir Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty

Associated Links

- [How the Sinking of Lusitania Changed World War II Britannica](#)
- [The Lusitania Sank in 18 Minutes, But its Passengers Suffered for Longer | Smithsonian Channel-YouTube](#)

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