

A U-boat 2 Anchovies on Toast Rolls Royce and A Maharajah's Millions

At 1pm on December 30, 1915, many of the passengers on the luxurious P&O passenger liner SS Persia were sitting down enjoying their lunch.

For many it was to be their last meal.

The German U-boat U-38 under the command of the German World War I U-Boat ace Max Valentiner was stalking SS Persia.

Up to this time, civilian liners had been given safe passage in times of war, but since England had recently begun using ships of this design as troop transports, Germany decided to treat them as legitimate targets.

The sinking was highly controversial, since it broke naval international law, or the "Cruiser Rules", that stated merchant shipping carrying passengers should be given opportunity for the passengers to disembark before combat could commence.

A warning shot across the bow should have been fired first.

Unfortunately, for the passengers on the SS Persia, the U-boat wasn't to know that in her case the passengers were not troops, the U-Boat fired a torpedo with no warning, and the ship sank in less than ten minutes.

Wrote one of the survivors,

*My Dearest Mother
On Thursday, 30th,
just as we had gone
down to lunch - I
had just finished two
anchovies on toast -*

there was a dull bang, a clatter of falling glass and a shudder through the ship... Everyone got up to fetch their life belts without any panic at all...

Just hours after he reached safety,

Saint Peter is watching the gates of Heaven, but he really has to go the bathroom.

He asks Jesus to watch the gates for a few minutes, and Jesus agrees.

As Jesus is standing there, he sees an old man leading a donkey up from Earth to Heaven.

He notices the old man has carpenter's tools with him.

When the old man gets to the gates, Jesus asks him to describe his life and explain why he feels he should be admitted into heaven.

The man explains, "In English, my name would be Joseph, but I didn't live in America or England. I lived a modest life, making things out of wood.

"I'm not remembered very well by most people, but almost everyone has heard of my son. I call him my son, but I was more of a Dad to him, he didn't really come into this world in the usual way.

"I sent my son out to be among the people of the World.

"He was ridiculed by many, and was even known to associate himself with some pretty

Second Lieutenant John Lionel Miller-Hallett, "Lion" to his friends, wrote to his mother to say he was safe.

On 18 December 1915, Miller-Hallett had set sail from London on the P&O steamship Persia.

The liner was bound for India, carrying the Christmas mail, 185 passengers and millions of pounds' worth of gold and silver.

By 30 December, the Persia had reached the eastern Mediterranean, and at 1 pm Lion and his fellow first-class passengers sat down for lunch. Five minutes later, the torpedo struck...

The S.S. Persia was the first ship sunk



**Eleanor Thornton
The Spirit of Ecstasy**

under this new policy of German maritime warfare and the news, when it broke, shocked the world.

The following from the Dictionary of Disasters At Sea (Hocking/Lloyds)

The liner Persia, Cdr. W. H. S. Hall, R.N.R., which left London on December 18th, 1915, and Marseilles on the 26th, was 71 miles S.E. by S. of Cape Martello, Crete, on the 30th, when she was torpedoed without warning by the U-38, Lt. Cdr. Max Valentiner

The attack occurred at 1.10 p.m. the vessel being struck on the port bow, and five minutes later the port boiler blew up.

She sank in a very short time and 334

unsavory characters, although he himself tried to be honest and perfect. My single biggest reason for trying to get into Heaven is to be reunited with my son."

Jesus is awe-struck by the man's story. He looks into the old man's eyes and asks, "Father?"

The old man's face brightens; he looks at Jesus, and asks, "Pinocchio?"

A priest, a minister and a rabbi were all sitting at table finishing dinner and discussing theology.

Suddenly an angel appeared before them.

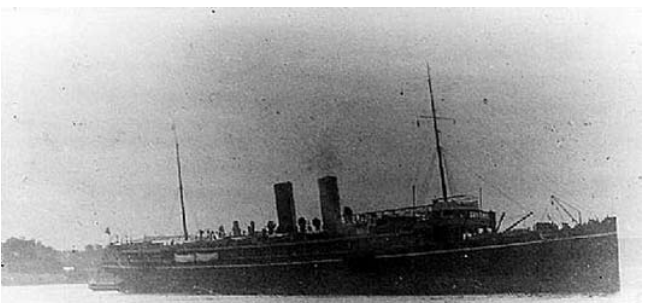
"I have been sent to grant each of you one wish," he said. "Who will go first?"

The catholic priest stood up. "I wish for the destruction of all Protestants!"

Then the protestant minister bolted up. "I wish for the destruction of all Catholics!"

The rabbi kept seated, so the angel asked, "How about you? What do you wish for, Rabbi?"

The rabbi answered, "Well, if you're going to grant their wishes, I'll just settle for another cup of coffee."



SS Persia

of the 501 persons on board were drowned, including Cdr. Hall. Two of her boats were drawn down when she foundered taking all their occupants with them, but four got away in safety. One hundred and sixty seven survivors were picked up, most of them by a trawler 30 hours later, and were landed at Alexandria.

Among the passengers were John, 2nd Baron Montagu of Beaulieu who survived and his secretary and mistress Eleanor Thornton who drowned and whose memory lives on as the model for the Rolls-Royce "Spirit of Ecstasy" mascot.

In addition to the wealthy passengers, at the time of sinking, Persia was carrying a large quantity of gold and jewels belonging to the Maharaja Jagatjij Singh.

Nearly 100 years later, in what was to become the worlds deepest ever salvage operation, robotic machinery was used to cut into the strong room of the SS Persia and retrieve part of its cargo including rubies and other items of jewellery.

It had been almost impossible to work remotely at such depths because the steel cables needed to suspend machinery and carry the power and video cables needed became too heavy beyond a certain length.

A special rope of synthetic fibres that is as strong as steel but slightly buoyant was designed especially for the job as was the winch that could let out the rope and wrap power and video cables around it.



There was a priest who had to go away for several days.

So he looked for a priest to fill in for him in the confession box. He called every priest he knew. None were available.

He finally called a Rabbi friend who agreed to stand in for him.

So the priest drew up a list of sins and their punishments.

The next few days the rabbi listened to confessions and helped the people.

The third day a man came in and said "Father forgive me for I have sinned."

Rabbi: How have you sinned?"

Person: I had sex with another man."

The rabbi was stumped, it was not on the list. So the rabbi asked the man to wait.

The rabbi asked everyone what the punishment was for sex with another man.

Finally the altar boy walked in. The rabbi asked what does the father normally give you for sex?

The altar boy replied "Usually two cookies and a glass of milk."