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This photo image, depicting coffins of *Lusitania* victims transported by horse-drawn carriage, was likely taken in Queenstown (now known as Cobh) in County Cork, Ireland. Many victims of the disaster are buried in mass graves in the [Old Church Cemetery](#). Courtesy, On-line Journal of Research on Irish Maritime History. Click on the image for a better view.

Before he returned *U-20* to her Fastnet course, Schwieger watched the horror on board the ship he had fatally wounded. He wrote in his war diary:

It looks as if the ship will stay afloat only for a very short time. [I gave order to] dive to 25 metres and leave the area seawards. I couldn't have fired another torpedo into this mass of humans desperately trying to save themselves.

Not many saved themselves, though. It was reported that 1,198 died. A survivor, Barbara Anderson McDermott, was one of thirty-two children on board. All but four perished. Mrs. McDermott still recalls the horror:

It [the torpedo] went through the front of the boat so the water was naturally going in fast and all those people who were down there [in the lower decks] were getting drowned.

The *Bluebell* rescued Captain Turner and other survivors. Most bodies were never recovered. Some of the victims could not be identified.

Many people were buried in mass graves in Queenstown/Cobh. The horrifying sight of coffins on top of coffins must have been overwhelming. One grave alone contained sixty-six coffins.

Germany, despite the shock of people around the world, was unapologetic. The German government had issued its warning. Their actions were justified, they said, because they believed the ship was carrying arms which would have been used to kill Germans.

But was the ship carrying arms?

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/VICTIMS-AND-SURVIVORS-Lusitania-Sinking>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/VICTIMS-AND-SURVIVORS-Lusitania-Sinking>

Questions 2 Ponder

Does Morality Play a Role on the Battlefield?

When a German U-boat captain saw a sea of people trying to save themselves, he did not fire a second torpedo at *Lusitania* on the 7th of May, 1915.

Kapitan-Leutnant (Kptlt) Walther Schwieger wrote these words in his diary:

I couldn't have fired another torpedo into this mass of humans desperately trying to save themselves.

Schwieger, a navy man whose battlefield was the Atlantic Ocean, could have fired another torpedo at the ship. Do you think he declined to do it because his concept of morality made him take a different course of action?

When you hear that *Lusitania's* passengers and crew were "desperately trying to save themselves," what does that mean to you?

Have you ever been in a situation where people were "desperately trying to save themselves?" What were those circumstances?

Media Stream



Burial of Lusitania Victims

Image online, courtesy ww1-propaganda-cards.com website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Burial-of-Lusitania-Victims>



Lusitania Survivor - Mrs. McDermott

Image online via Life Legacy.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lusitania-Survivor-Mrs.-McDermott>

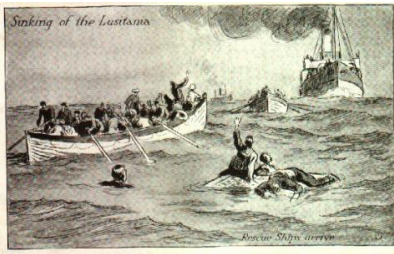


Mass Graves in Queenstown

Image online, courtesy the temakel.net website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mass-Graves-in-Queenstown>



Rescue Operations

Image online, courtesy the ww1-propaganda-cards.com website.

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