

FINDING ARCADIAN

ONCE THE WORLD'S LARGEST DELUXE CRUISE SHIP, THE ARCADIAN BEGAN THE VITAL MISSION AS FLAGSHIP FOR SIR IAN HAMILTON DURING THE DISASTROUS GALLIPOLI INVASION. THEN, WORKING AS A TROOPSHIP IT FELL VICTIM TO A U-BOAT. NOW, THE WRECK HAS BEEN DISCOVERED BY AN ENTERPRISING GREEK HISTORIAN AND DIVER

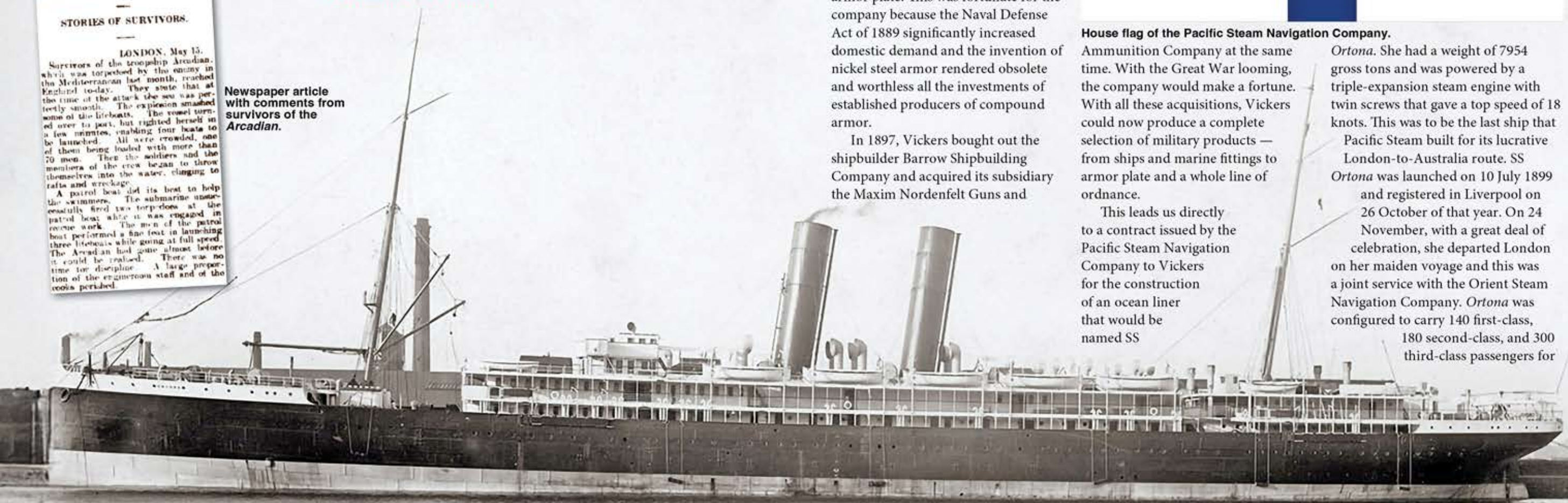
BY ADAM STANTON

SINKING OF THE ARCADIAN.

STORIES OF SURVIVORS.

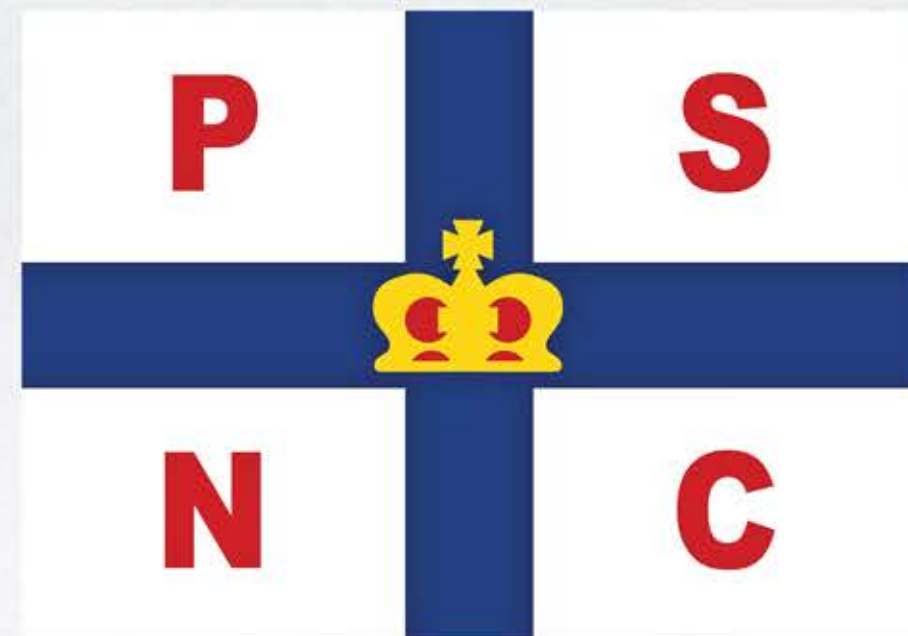
LONDON, May 15.
Survivors of the troopship Arcadian, which was torpedoed by the enemy in the Mediterranean last month, reached England to-day. They state that at the time of the attack the sea was perfectly smooth. The explosion smashed some of the lifeboats. The vessel turned over to port, but righted herself in a few minutes, enabling four boats to be launched. All were crowded, one of them being loaded with more than 70 men. Then the soldiers and the members of the crew began to throw themselves into the water, clinging to rafts and wreckage.
A patrol boat did its best to help the swimmers. The submarine unsuccessfully fired two torpedoes at the patrol boat while it was engaged in rescue work. The men of the patrol boat performed a fine feat in launching three lifeboats while going at full speed. The Arcadian had gone almost before it could be reached. There was no time for discipline. A large proportion of the engineering staff and of the cooks perished.

Newspaper article with comments from survivors of the Arcadian.



As the 19th Century came to a close, the company of Vickers, Sons & Maxim Limited was a powerhouse in the ship and armaments construction industry. Originally starting out casting church bells, Vickers acquired other companies and in 1868 began to manufacture marine shafts and then marine propellers. They also began supplying steel forgings for gun barrel manufacturers. By the mid-1880s, the stockholders decided to diversify into large-scale armaments production and by the end of 1888, Vickers produced and tested both their first artillery piece and their first armor plate. This was fortunate for the company because the Naval Defense Act of 1889 significantly increased domestic demand and the invention of nickel steel armor rendered obsolete and worthless all the investments of established producers of compound armor.

In 1897, Vickers bought out the shipbuilder Barrow Shipbuilding Company and acquired its subsidiary the Maxim Nordenfolt Guns and



House flag of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company.

Ammunition Company at the same time. With the Great War looming, the company would make a fortune. With all these acquisitions, Vickers could now produce a complete selection of military products — from ships and marine fittings to armor plate and a whole line of ordnance.

This leads us directly to a contract issued by the Pacific Steam Navigation Company to Vickers for the construction of an ocean liner that would be named SS

Ortona. She had a weight of 7954 gross tons and was powered by a triple-expansion steam engine with twin screws that gave a top speed of 18 knots. This was to be the last ship that

Pacific Steam built for its lucrative London-to-Australia route. SS *Ortona* was launched on 10 July 1899 and registered in Liverpool on 26 October of that year. On 24 November, with a great deal of celebration, she departed London on her maiden voyage and this was a joint service with the Orient Steam Navigation Company. *Ortona* was configured to carry 140 first-class, 180 second-class, and 300 third-class passengers for

The SS *Ortona* setting out for a voyage while operating with the Pacific Steam Navigation Company. When the ship sank, the rakish funnels (which gave a look of speed) tore off and the masts shot to the surface like rockets, killing some of the troops treading water until rescue.