

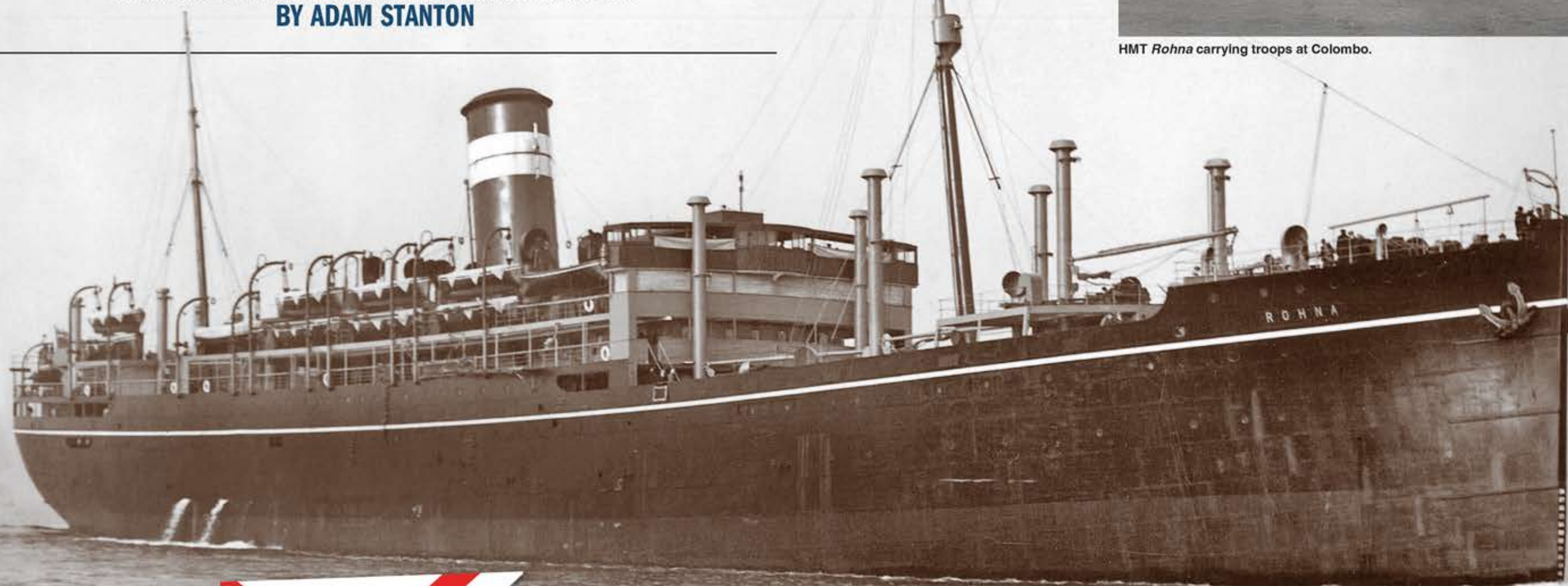
DEADLY COVER-UP

AFTER OVER EIGHT DECADES, IT IS TIME FOR THE FULL FACTS ON THE
DISASTROUS SINKING OF HMT ROHNA TO BE FULLY DISCLOSED

BY ADAM STANTON



HMT *Rohna* carrying troops at Colombo.



House flag of the British India Steam Navigation Company.

As a troopship, HMT *Rohna* was usually overcrowded and poorly protected.

During the mid-1920s, the British India Steam Navigation Company was doing some good business. In fact, business was so good that the company ordered two completely new ships for its profitable Madras/Nagapatam/Singapore service. Even though they would be sister ships, the new vessels would be built by different shipyards while also having differing powerplants. At its Hebburn-on-Tyneside yard, Hawthorn Leslie

and Company would construct *Rohna* while Darclay, Curle and Company at Glasgow-on-Clydeside would build sistership *Rajula*.

Named after a village in Sonipat, Punjab, India, *Rohna* was launched on 24 August 1926 and completed on 5 November of that year. Her power came from 15 corrugated furnaces that heated five single-ended boilers with a combined heating surface of 14,080-square-feet. These fed steam at

215-lbs/sq-in into two four-cylinder quadruple expansion steam engines. They would develop nearly 5000 horsepower through her twin screws. During sea trials, she achieved a maximum speed of 14.3 knots and a cruising speed of 12.5 knots.

Rohna had a length of 461.4-ft, beam of 61.8-ft, draft of 33-ft, and a depth of 29.9-ft. As built, she had a capacity for 281 first-class passengers with 33 in second and 100 in third.

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