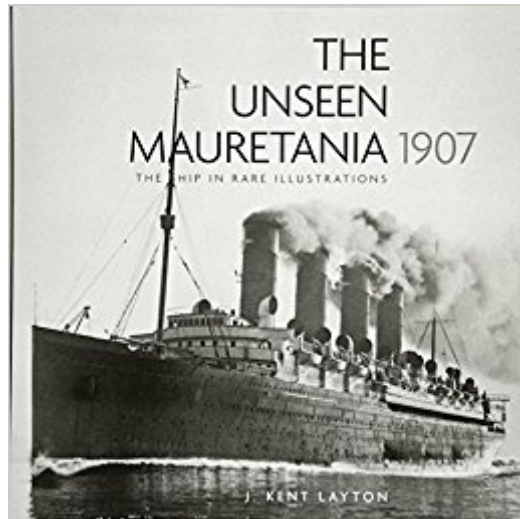




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# **The Unseen Mauretania (1907): The Ship In Rare Illustrations**



## Synopsis

An evocative visual history of the legendary liner known as the “greyhound of the Atlantic” When she took to the rugged North Atlantic for the first time in November of 1907, the Cunard company’s Mauretania was the world’s largest and most luxurious ocean liner. But beyond her comfort and size, it was hoped that her mighty engines would guarantee that she would also become the fastest ship on the Atlantic. She and her sister ship, the Lusitania, carried with them the hopes of an entire nation. Although the Lusitania’s life was tragically cut short in 1915, the Mauretania went on to hold the Blue Riband speed prize for 22 years. This evocative book by maritime expert J. Kent Layton follows her glorious career spanning portions of four decades of the twentieth century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

J. Kent Layton has studied the history of the great Atlantic liners for over three decades. His other works include *Lusitania: An Illustrated Biography* (2015 Centennial Edition), *The Edwardian Superliners: A Trio of Trios*, *On A Sea of Glass: The Life & Loss of the RMS Titanic*, and *Transatlantic Liners*. He lives in the Finger Lakes region of Central New York, and divides his time between his writing and his work as a piano tuner.

Despite being one of the most well-known ships of the 20th century, the lack of a serious reference book dedicated to the Mauretania has always surprised me. This book rectifies that problem.

Although this book is advertised as a photographic history, J. Kent Layton provides an in-depth look at the ship from design and inception to scrapping. Far from being a coffee table book, this is a pretty substantial history which covers the many ups and downs of her 28-year career, from records won and lost, fires, storms, and collisions, to the Gilded Age and the Great Depression. The photographs, of course, are the highlight of this book. There are more than 250, most of which are of excellent quality, and rich with little details. These range from photographs of the ship fitting out, in harbor, and at sea, candid photos taken by passengers, images of her interiors, programs for shipboard events, and a number of period postcards and posters. Many came from private collections, and are shown here for the first time. The captions are quite informative, and worth reading by themselves. Some photographs are a little out of focus, or of poor quality, but nonetheless have some historic value. The Mauretania, for me at least, remains THE iconic British liner of the 1900s, and this book is a fine tribute. If I have one issue, it's that there are only a couple pictures of the ship under construction. I'm a bit of a naval architecture geek, and I love seeing shots of shipyards "in action." That aside, this deserves to be on the shelf of any serious ocean liner buff.

What a fabulous book about one of the most important luxury liners in history. Full of facts that are not normally known. Full of fabulous photos!

A superb biography of possibly the greatest Atlantic liner of all time. Coupled with brilliant photographs as always providing very possibly the best Mauretania lifetime history yet written.

Lovely book and great pictures

Fine companion to Eric Sauder's "Unseen Lusitania" of similar size and quality, as the two sister ships were. The details are plentiful and of interest to ocean liner buffs. A few photos of the Mauretania's auction of fittings before scrapping [there were none] would have been welcome.

Great book on the Mauretania! Worth the investment!

On the whole, not bad. The text is quite interesting, which is often not the case in this kind of book. The quality of the photo reproductions is pretty good, and out of a hundred or so images of the ship, perhaps half a dozen are first rate, which is about what one would expect. My lukewarm response is tempered by the fact that this is the only book of its kind about the Mauretania available.

J. Kent Layton, author of several valuable maritime books, offers a lavish look at the career of the holder of the Blue Riband, Mauretania. It is clear that the author has done his home work, as he went beyond the scope of visiting the standard archives and included many new accounts of the Mauretania's construction, banner voyages, and the end of her storied career. An authoritative text guides us as we learn about the big events such as her triumphing over severe storms to even minor details such as her problematic rattling that affected her public rooms, fire places and even elevators. Peppered throughout are the voices of those who designed her, sailed aboard her and those witnessing her final days as she made her way to the scrap yard. The biggest selling point of "The Unseen Mauretania", are the rare photos. We get crystal clear glimpses of her sumptuous interiors through out the years. Shipping lines tried to keep up with the times and updated and renovated rooms and we see how the Mauretania changed over time. There is a nice selection of ephemera such as menus, programs, passenger lists that give you a window as to what it would be like to travel aboard her. Rare is the perfect word to describe many of these photos, many of which were shared from personal collections of ocean liner collectors. We see the ship from almost every angle and many with passengers and crew in their period clothing. You really get a feel for life on board. My favorite photo is of the Mauretania in the shipping yard, with her funnels only half way finished. It totally changes the look of the ship and makes her look more modern. Layton quotes her longtime Captain Arthur Rostron who was invited, but declined to join the ship on her trip to the scrapyard, "I prefer to remember her as she was in her best days."

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