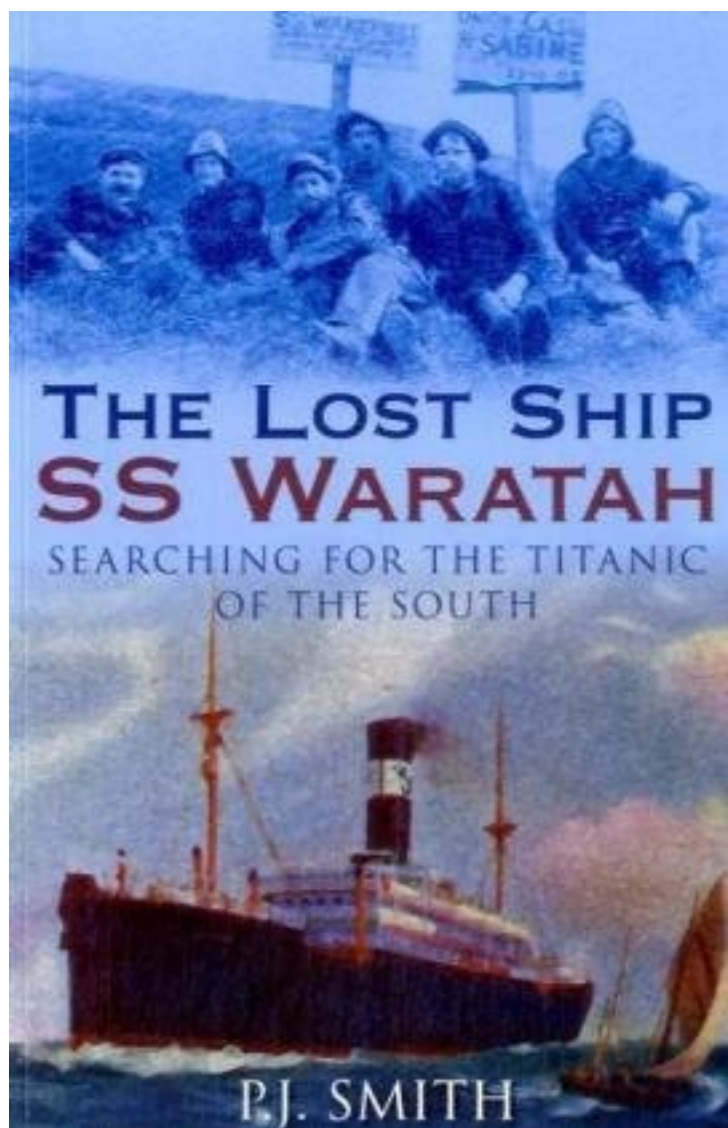


The Lost Ship "SS Waratah"



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著者:Smith, P. J.

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In 1909 the SS Waratah embarked upon her second voyage, from Sydney to the UK via South Africa. Loaded with families, including many children, the journey ended abruptly when the ship vanished between Durban and Cape Town. Ironically, Waratah was due to be fitted with pioneering radio equipment when she reached the UK, but to this day not a trace has been found of the ship or her human cargo. Hoping she was adrift, the horrified authorities ordered a search vessel to comb the seas, but in three months they found nothing. A second, longer, search was commissioned soon afterwards but still not a trace was found. The mystery has spawned many conspiracy theories and even an expensive modern-day underwater search by Emlyn Brown's South African team working with Clive Cussler, an account of which is included in this book. A popular theory suggests the original searches were poorly executed, but the fascinating diaries of Walter Smith, a key figure on both original search missions, as well as the journals of the captains of each vessel, prove their thoroughness. They recount the expanses of water they covered, the dangers they faced and many bizarre things they stumbled across as well as the daily experiences of the crew. P.J. Smith is the great-niece of Walter Smith. She recently came across his diaries, left to her by her father and long buried in her attic, and was instantly gripped by the story. She has carefully transcribed them and researched the wider history of the Waratah to compile this unique book.

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