



Ship Fact Sheet



CHINA (1896)

Base data at 29 November 1896. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1896-1928
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Harland & Wolff Ltd
Yard	Belfast
Country	UK
Yard number	299
Registry	Belfast, UK
Official number	104467
Signal letters	PMLK
Call sign	
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage *	7,912 grt
Net tonnage	4,166 nrt
Deadweight*	5,630 tons
Length	152.50m (500.5ft)
Breadth	16.51m (54.2ft)
Depth	7.65m (25.1ft)
Draught*	8.070m (26ft 5 7/8in)
Engines	Triple-expansion steam engine
Engine builders	Harland & Wolff Ltd
Works	Belfast
Country	UK
Power	11,000 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	18 knots
Passenger capacity	308 first class and 156 second class
Cargo capacity	7,093 cubic metres (250,537 cubic feet)
Crew [1914]	282 (114 European, 168 Asian). Deck 23 European, 45 Asian; engine room 11 European, 82 Asian; purser's department 97 European, 41 Asian
Employment	UK/India and UK/Australia mail services

Career

- 13.06.1896: Launched.
- 13.11.1896: Registered.
- 28.11.1896: Delivered as *China* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. Her completion was delayed when fire at her builders destroyed her furniture. She was the second of five sisters, following *India* (1896) and followed by *Egypt* (1897), *Arabia* (1898), and *Persia* (1900).
- 18.12.1896: Maiden voyage London/Australia.
- 24.03.1898: Stranded at about 2019hrs on Azalea Point, Perim Island, in the Red Sea, when homeward bound from Australia. Captain Morris de Horne was in charge with Perim light visible, and the Court of Enquiry found that he had set an improper course and failed to hear warnings from the Second Officer; his certificate was suspended for 6 months. The passengers and crew were landed without mishap together with the mails, specie and baggage.
- 25.03.1898: *Carthage* arrived from Aden, embarked 409 passengers, their baggage and the mails and sailed for London via Brindisi on 27th March.
- 06.04.1898: *Ancona* arrived from Bombay to help in the discharge of cargo, though much of the wheat, gum, wool, leather and apples were condemned.
- 15.09.1898: Refloated after lengthy operations by German and Swedish salvors, and towed into Perim the following day. The tarred oakura used to seal the planks used for preliminary patching proved very tasty to local land crabs.
- 08.02.1899: Temporary repairs completed.
- 09.02.1899: Left Perim for Belfast under her own steam but with a salvage vessel in attendance.
- 18.03.1899: Arrived at Belfast for repairs.
- 03.1900: Returned to service after a refit by her builders at a cost of £150,000.
- 1900: Brought back wounded from the Boxer Rising in China.
- 1902: Broke the record from Fremantle to Colombo with a run of 8 days and 28 minutes.
- 03.05.1903: Fire among the empty beer barrels in the purser's storeroom.
- 1904: Stopped and examined by Russian warships in the Mediterranean.
- 03.1906: Deadweight 5,328 tons. Draught 8.055m (26ft 5¼in).
- 06.1908: Insulated cargo capacity 2,109 cubic metres (74,791 cubic feet).
- 12.1909: Hit the quayside leaving Tilbury and broke her stern post. Both her Chief Officer and Second Officer were discharged.
- 11.06.1911: The body of Alice Brewster, a first class saloon stewardess, was discovered in her cabin. Death was due to head injuries, and a Goanese bathroom attendant was tried, convicted and executed for Miss Brewster's murder.
- 04.11.1914: Hired as a naval hospital ship.
- 1914: Narrowly escaped capture when sent to collect RN Division wounded from Flushing.
- 06.1916: Received a visit and commendation from King George V.

- n.d.:* One of her officers, a doctor and two nurses were killed when the ship's boat they were sailing in hit a mine in Scapa Flow.
- 1918/1919:* After the Armistice served as a transport, repatriating Indian and Australian troops.
- 1919:* Returned to commercial service.
- 03.06.1920:* Re-registered as 7,951 grt.
- 1926:* One lascar seaman murdered by another.
- 01.06.1928:* Sold for £24,000 to Osaka Kaiji Kabushiki Kaisha, Osaka, for demolition.

- ends -