



# Ship Fact Sheet



## KAISAR-I-HIND (1878)

Base data at 17 August 1878. Last amended November 2008

\* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1878-1897
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Yard	Greenock
Country	UK
Yard number	211
Registry	Greenock, UK
Official number	76182
Signal letters	
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage*	4,023 grt
Net tonnage*	2,560 nrt
Deadweight [1884]	3,316 tons
Length	122.09m (400.7ft)
Breadth	12.89m (42.3ft)
Depth	7.40m (24.3ft)
Draught	7.173m (23ft 6½in)
Construction (if not steel)	Iron
Engines	Compound steam engine
Engine builders	Caird & Co
Works	Greenock
Country	UK
Power	3,800 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	15 knots
Passenger capacity*	176 first class, 64 second class
Cargo capacity [1884]	3,602 cubic metres (127,222 cubic feet)
Crew	
Employment	UK/India service

**Career**

- 06.03.1877: Ordered.
- 04.05.1878: Launched by Mrs Henry Bayley, wife of P&O's joint Managing Director.
- 24.07.1878: Registered.
- 30.07.1878: Ran trials.
- 17.08.1878: Handed over as *Kaisar-i-Hind* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company after her original prefabricated screw had been replaced with a solid one. She was the first P&O ship fitted with refrigerating machinery, and cost £117,293. Her name, apparently meaning 'Empress of India', was given to mark Queen Victoria's adoption of that title in 1877.
- 22.09.1878: Maiden sailing London/Bombay. She was nicknamed the 'Bridge to India' by virtue of her comfort, distinctive outline and popularity.
- 11.1879: Ran aground in the Suez Canal.
- 1880/1887: Occasional voyages extended to Australia in the Spring and Autumn peak periods.
- 23.05.1884: Re-measured. 4,008 grt, 2,386 nrt. 141 first class and 50 second class passenger capacity.
- 07.06.1886: Rammed by the British India Associated Steamer *Dorunda* at Suez. Had to discharge some cargo for repairs to be carried out.
- 02.11.1886: Collided with barque *Stillwater* in the Strait of Gibraltar. *Kaisar-i-Hind* was little damaged, but *Stillwater* lost some yards and her figurehead, and was towed into Gibraltar by the P&O ship.
- 1888: Funnel lengthened in an inconclusive attempt to produce a better draught and more speed.
- 14.10.1892: Embarked Lord Hawke's cricket team for India.
- 1893: Chartered for Indian trooping.
- 14.10.1897: Lost all her boats and suffered deck damage in a typhoon while en route from Singapore to Hong Kong, where she arrived 36 hours late. Mails forwarded to Shanghai in *Manila*.
- 11.1897: Sold for £7,000 to Hajee Cassum Joosub, Bombay.
- 01.1898: Broken up at Bombay.

**TRAGEDY ON BOARD A P&O VESSEL - SEVERAL LIVES LOST**

*"Times of India" 5 February 1895.*

Intelligence has been brought by the P&O Company's steamer *Pekin*, from China, of the sad death of an officer of the company who had very many friends in Bombay. On Sunday evening, the 20th ult., when about one day's steaming from Penang, while the steamer *Kaisar-i-Hind's* companies were at muster, a Lascar fell overboard. The second officer, Mr. A J Cooper, at once jumped after him, a life-buoy being dropped at the same time. A boat was lowered at once, but in the act of lowering, the foremost fall came unhooked and the boat was capsized and broken, a quartermaster and several of the crew being precipitated into the water. Another boat was lowered as soon as possible, which proceeded first to pick up those who had been capsized from the first boat. All these were rescued with the exception of the quartermaster who sank at once. A search was then made for Mr. Cooper and the Lascar, who had been last seen about five yards from the lifebuoy, but no trace could be discovered of either, so that whether Mr. Cooper was seized by a shark or drowned during the struggle with the drowning Lascar, will forever remain a secret. At the time of jumping overboard Mr. Cooper was wearing the Albert Medal, Royal Humane Society's Medal, and the Stanhope Gold Medal, all of which had been obtained for saving life; and in connection with one of these deeds of heroism he had been presented with a purse of upwards of a hundred guineas subscribed by the passengers of the vessel on which he was serving at the time. A thorough search was made for more than an hour, after which the *Kaisar-i-Hind* proceeded sadly on her way.

Another account states that when the vessel arrived at Penang a number of coolies were taken on board. Among the passengers was a Malay, who, intoxicated by drink or *bhang*, created a disturbance, which was promptly suppressed by the gunner. Smarting under this unusual discipline, the Malay next morning armed himself with a *dao* and ran amuck among the passengers, killing four men and three women. Escaping from these shambles, he jumped overboard with the intention of committing suicide. The alarm of a "man overboard" was given at once, and Mr. Cooper impulsively jumped over the side and went to the assistance of the drowning man. A few swift, strong strokes brought him alongside, and he clutched the man by the shoulder, but to the utter dismay of the people on deck, who were watching this act of heroism, both Malay and Englishman sank never to rise again. The captain immediately ordered one of the boats to be lowered, but something fouled, and a European quartermaster and a native Lascar who were engaged on the business were precipitated into the sea and killed.

[Note: P&O records do not confirm the latter story. *Kaisar-i-Hind* did not reach Penang until the day after Mr. Cooper, the lascar seaman and the quartermaster (Mr. J Forster) were drowned]

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