



Ship Fact Sheet



MOOLTAN (1923)

Base data at 21 September 1923. Last amended April 2009

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1923-1954
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Harland & Wolff Ltd
Yard	Belfast
Country	UK
Yard number	587
Registry	Belfast, UK
Official number	145435
Signal letters	KPNG
Call sign	GFBC
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage*	20,847 grt
Net tonnage*	12,836 nrt
Deadweight*	12,430 tons
Length	192.78m (625.0ft) loa;183.06m (600.8ft) b/p
Breadth	22.36m (73.4ft)
Depth	16.03m (52.6ft)
Draught	9.723m (31.9ft)
Engines*	Quadruple-expansion steam engines
Engine builders	Harland & Wolff Ltd
Works	Belfast
Country	UK
Power*	13,300 ihp
Propulsion*	Twin screw
Speed*	16 knots
Passenger capacity*	327 first class, 329 second class
Cargo capacity*	20,412 cubic metres (720,960 cubic feet) including 5,984 cubic metres (211,350 cubic feet) insulated
Crew	422
Employment	UK/Australia mail service

Career

- 29.11.1918: Ordered.
- 15.02.1923: Launched.
- 21.09.1923: Ran trials and delivered as *Mooltan* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at a cost of £1,566,118. She was the first P&O ship over 20,000 gross tons. P&O sacrificed speed for reliability by not giving *Mooltan* and her sister *Maloja* steam turbines, which had been introduced in *Naldera* and *Narkunda* in 1920, but they were popular favourites noted for their magnificent steadiness, broad decks and solid comfort, however, their small rudders made handling difficult. All her cabins were above the main deck, all of them had portholes, and there were special suites on the promenade deck in Louis XVI style.
- 05.10.1923: Maiden voyage Tilbury/Bombay.
- 1929: Fitted with British Thompson Houston exhaust-driven electric turbines and motors (not the Bauer-Wach equipment commoner in the P&O fleet) increasing her power to 16,000 ihp and her speed to 17 knots.
- 11.1929: Accommodation overhauled and improved. Now 356 first class, 336 second class. Her tonnages now 20,952 grt, 12,823 nrt, 11,700 deadweight tons.
- 1931: Accommodation again overhauled and improved.
- 1938: Fitted to carry chilled beef.
- 06.09.1939: Requisitioned for service as an Armed Merchant Cruiser.
- 19.09.1939: Arrived in Belfast to be converted by Harland & Wolff followed by additional attention in London. Her second funnel (a dummy used for engine room ventilation) was removed to improve the arc of fire of her anti-aircraft guns, but later replaced in shorter form. As an AMC she served in the South Atlantic based on Freetown, and had the satisfaction of not losing a single merchant ship in her care.
- 31.07.1940: Attacked by a German reconnaissance aircraft in the Western Approaches, while en route Plymouth to Freetown.
- 26.01.1941: Returned to P&O for conversion to a troopship by R & H Green & Silley Weir Ltd, Tilbury.
- 05.1941: Conversion to a troopship completed on Tyneside. Carried Allied troops in the Middle East Campaign.
- 07.11.1942: Took part in the North African landings at Arzew, east of Oran in company with *Ettrick*.
- 06.06.1945: The first P&O passenger ship to enter the Port of London after VE-Day.
- 16.07.1947: Returned to P&O and reconditioned for commercial use by her builders.
- 26.08.1948: Re-entered commercial service. Now 21,039 grt, carrying 1,030 tourist class passengers. Most outward traffic was Ministry of Transport emigrant work, but P&O's own passengers on the return trip.
- 04.1949: Arrived at Tilbury the day after a passenger died of smallpox. Quarantined for three days before disembarkation, but five other

passengers died later.

1951: Cargo capacity now 15,349 cubic metres (542,160 cubic feet) including 4,355 cubic metres (153,810 cubic feet) insulated.

18.11.1953: Last homeward departure from Brisbane.

07.01.1954: Last arrival at Tilbury.

23.01.1954: Sold for £150,000 to British Iron and Steel Corporation (Salvage) Ltd, and allocated to Metal Industries Ltd for demolition at Faslane.

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