



Ship Fact Sheet



TIBER (1846)

Base data at 26 October 1846. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1846-1847
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	Laid down as <i>Ceylon</i>
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Caird & Co
Yard	Greenock
Country	UK
Yard number	
Registry	
Official number	
Signal letters	
Classification society	
Gross tonnage	764 grt
Net tonnage	466 nrt
Deadweight	
Length	56.00m (183.8ft)
Breadth	8.14m (26.7ft)
Depth	5.24m (17.2ft)
Draught	
Construction (if not steel)	Iron
Engines	Oscillating steam engines
Engine builders	
Works	
Country	
Power	280 ihp
Propulsion	Paddles
Speed	9 knots
Passenger capacity	
Cargo capacity	
Crew	
Employment	Italian and Peninsular services

Career

- 08.08.1846: Laid down as *Ceylon*. Renamed *Tiber* prior to delivery, after the Italian river that flows through Rome. Some documents confuse her with the chartered steamer *Tiger* that P&O employed at the same time.
- 26.10.1846: Arrived at Southampton from her builders as *Tiber* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at a cost of £28,600. She had a bunker capacity of 225 tons. Her maiden voyage seems to have been to the west coast of Italy.
- 07.01.1847: First voyage on Peninsular route, Southampton/Vigo/Oporto/Lisbon/Cadiz/Gibraltar and return.
- 20.02.1847: Left Lisbon on a homeward voyage from Gibraltar with 12 cabin passengers, a few second class and some local people travelling to Vigo on deck.
- 21.02.1847: At about noon hit a rock in dense fog off Villa de Conde about 20km (12 miles) from Oporto and sank in deep water within 20 minutes. Boats from the shore rescued all aboard apart from the ship's cook, a Spanish army officer, a Portuguese mother and child and some of the deck passengers. Some mails were recovered and forwarded to England in HMS *Bloodhound* which was sent to the scene, but the small amount of cargo and luggage that came or was got ashore was plundered by local people. Salvage was proposed in August 1847 but seems not to have been carried out. *Tiber* was insured for £20,000.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

There are no records in the P&O archives of *Tiber's* precise movements during her brief career, nor does the relevant folder of miscellaneous papers, one of a set on each P&O ship put together by the Company's archivist in the late 1960s, include anything of use.

The Minutes of the P&O Board Meeting on 12 March 1847 has an entry as follows:

"The Protest [i.e. a legal deposition as to the facts of the case] entered by Captain Bingham, Commander of the steam ship *Tiber* at Oporto relating to the loss of that vessel near Villa de Conde [unclear] on the 21st February having been read, it was resolved that Captain Bourne, Captain Nairne and Captain Sparkes be requested to investigate the circumstances attending the loss of the *Tiber*, and report the result to the Board."

The committee's report is given in the Minutes of the P&O Board Meeting on 26 March 1847, and runs to nearly three pages. It is not photocopiable although it might be possible to photograph it. In fact, it gives few details of the circumstances of the wreck (with which the Board would have been familiar from the Protest mentioned earlier, which has not been preserved in P&O archives). It dwells primarily on whether Captain Bingham's decision to remain under way in thick fog was wise, and concluded that it would have been better had he anchored and waited for the weather to clear, even though he was concerned about delays to the mails he had on board.

The Board accepted these findings and there is no other reference to the wreck except a note on 27 August 1847 that a Mr Levi had approached the Company about the possibility of undertaking salvage on its behalf, this matter being referred to its underwriters.

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