



Ship Fact Sheet



ARABIA (1898)

Base data at 12 March 1898. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1898-1916
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	286
Registry	Greenock, UK
Official number	105587
Signal letters	QBHS
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	7,903 grt
Net tonnage	4,167 nrt
Deadweight*	5,051 tons
Length	152.32m (499.9ft)
Breadth	16.45m (54.0ft)
Depth	11.46m (37.6ft)
Draught*	8.151m (26ft 9in)
Engines	Triple-expansion steam engine
Engine builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Works	Greenock
Country	UK
Power	11,000 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	18 knots
Passenger capacity	317 first class and 152 second class (troopship: 2,500)
Cargo capacity	4,850 cubic metres (171,303 cubic feet)
Crew [1914]	283 Total (116 European, 167 Asian). Deck 23 European, 45 Asian; Engineerroom 11 European, 81 Asian; Purser's department 99 European, 41 Asian
Employment	UK/India service

Career

- 10.11.1897: Launched, after some delay due to an engineers' strike.
- 12.03.1898: Registered as *Arabia* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at a cost of £250,000. The fourth of five sisters - after *India* and *China* (both 1896) and *Egypt* (1897), and before *Persia* (1900). Named after the peninsula in the extreme south-west of Asia, between Africa, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Her maiden voyage was to India and she spent all her peacetime service on that route.
- 1898: Took Lord Curzon to India to take up his appointment as Viceroy.
- 1902: Took a full load of passengers to the Delhi Durbar, who nicknamed her 'RMS Grosvenor Square'.
- 03.1905: Deadweight 5,494 tons.
- 15.03.1905: Hit heavily amidships by *Riverdale* when berthed in Bombay.
- 1910: Took part in an impromptu race with Orient Steam's *Omrak* (a ship with which she had a long rivalry) from Gibraltar to Plymouth – but lost.
- 06.1910: Deadweight 5,297 tons. Draught 8.074m (26ft 5in).
- 12.10.1912: Stern hit by steamer *Powerful* off Southampton when two days out en route for Gibraltar, leaving a hole in the native crew WC above the waterline. Lascar Hassan Moosa was crushed to death in the collision.
- 1915/1916: Three return voyages UK/Australia.
- 09.05.1915: Escaped a surfaced enemy submarine in the English Channel by laying down a smokescreen.
- 03.07.1915: Avoided two enemy submarines in the Channel.
- 06.11.1916: Torpedoed and sunk at about 1100hrs by the German submarine UB43, at 36°N-21°E about 180 km (112 miles) south by west of Cape Matapan, Greece. She was on a voyage from Sydney, NSW to the United Kingdom with 283 crew, 437 passengers and general cargo. 11 engineroom crew were lost but the survivors all took to the boats within 15 minutes and were picked up by four armed trawlers (who landed their rescuees in Malta) and the Ellerman liner *City of Marseilles*, bound for Port Said. *Arabia's* sinking produced an open exchange of letters between the United States of America and Germany, despite the comparatively slight loss of life. It was said that the German authorities claimed that the submarine commander had mistaken the dresses of lady passengers for Chinese soldiers en route for France.

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